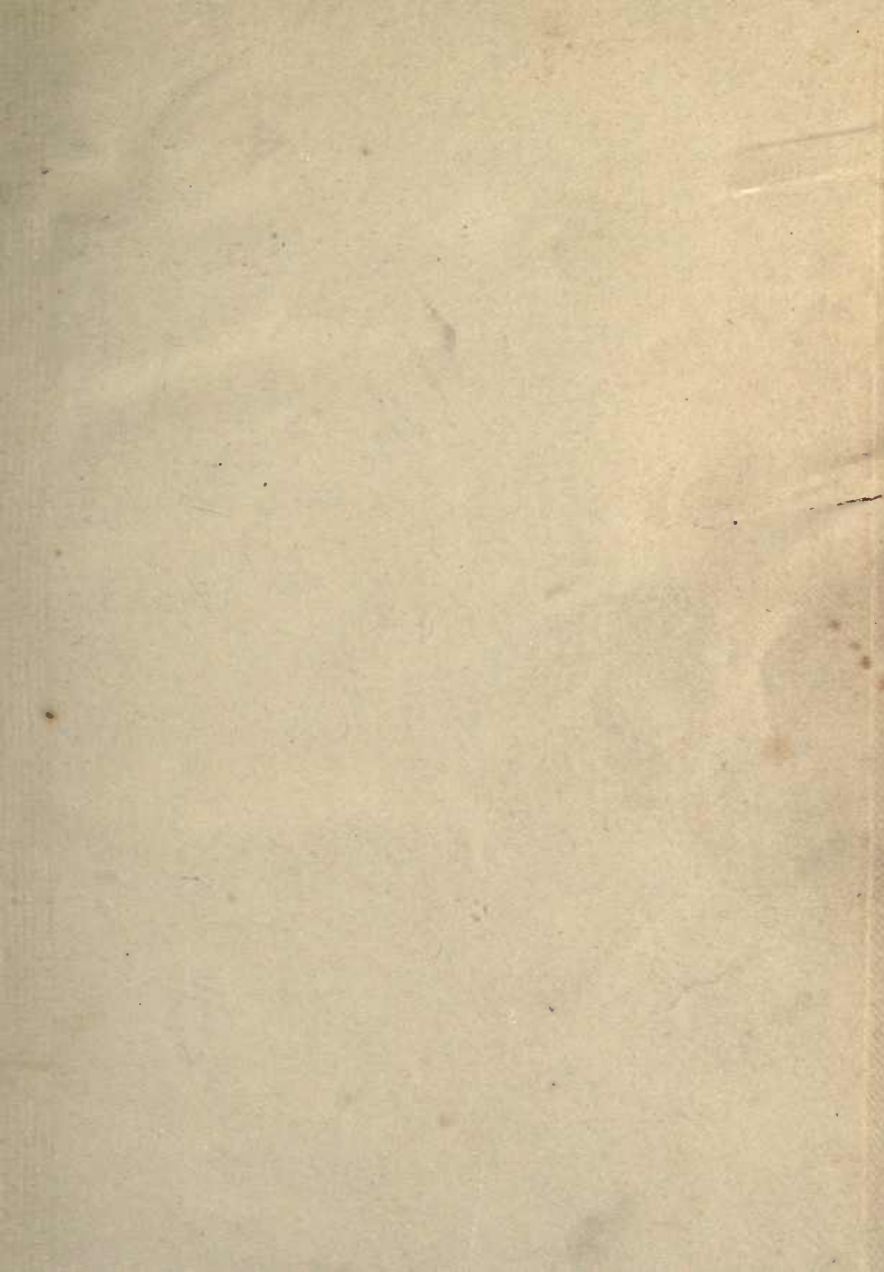
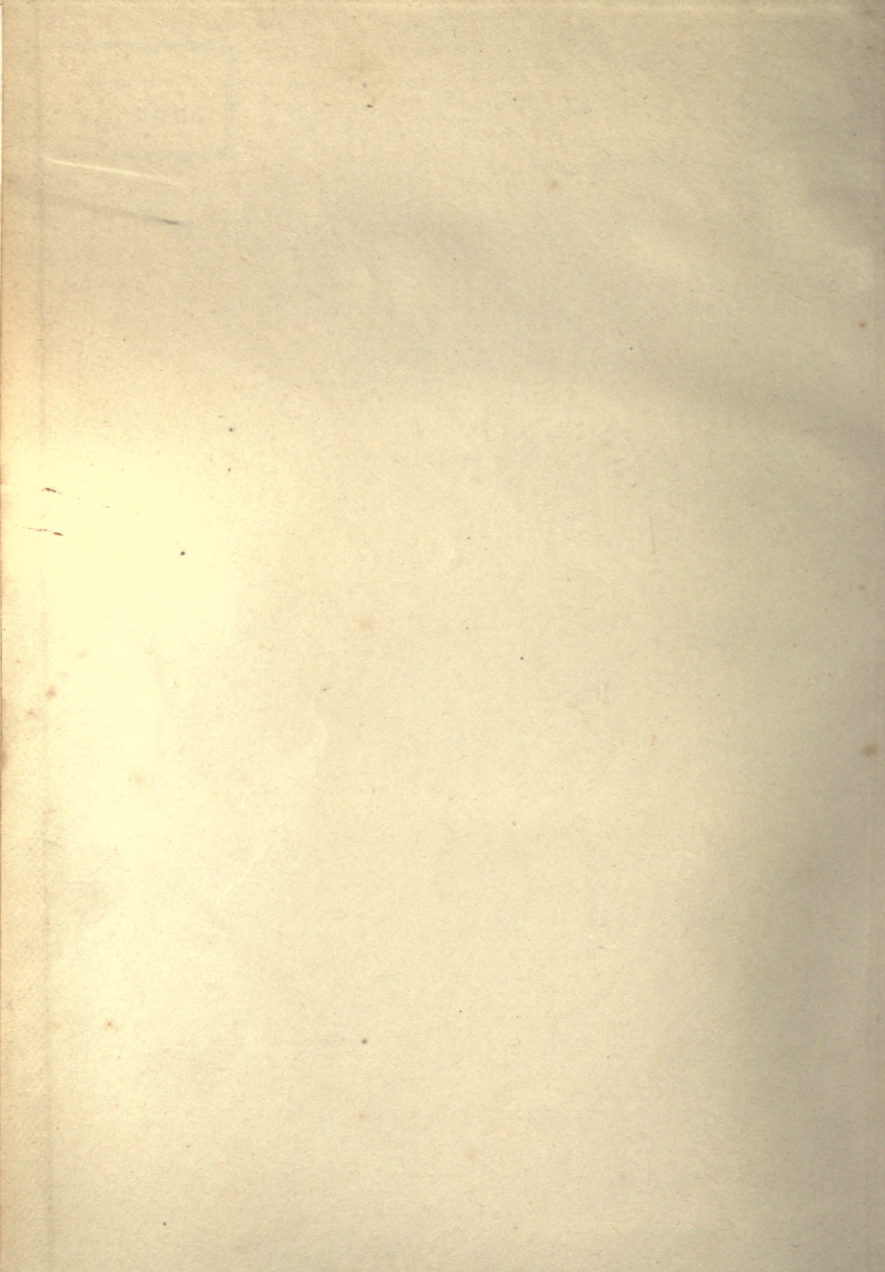


The Old and the New Ideal.

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C. K. OGDEN





The Old and the New Ideal

By the author of "The New Ideal" and "The Old Ideal"

THE NEW IDEAL

THE OLD IDEAL

THE NEW IDEAL

THE OLD IDEAL

The Old and the New Ideal.

**A Solution of that part of the Social Question
which pertains to Love, Marriage and
Sexual Intercourse.**

**BY
EMIL F. RUEDEBUSCH.**

SECOND EDITION.

**Published by the Author.
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The Old and the New Ideal
PORTAGE

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PREFACE.

In March, 1895, I published a German book, which I named "Freie Menschen in der Liebe und Ehe" (Free Men and Women in Love and Marriage.) It was, like this volume, a plain and open treatise on the "dangerous" subject—crude prose void of the embellishments of language with which a literary genius might adorn the same truths. Considering these facts, I must say that the manner in which the book was received by press and public, was surprisingly favorable. A large number of newspapers and periodicals, of this country and Germany, printed highly appreciative critiques; a still larger number of private correspondents (including many noted personages) were even more fervent in their praise, and—last but not least—the book found a very ready sale.

For the first attempt of an author who does not by any means conceive it to be his "inspired vocation" to write books, this may indeed appear to be a great success. But, alas, I am forced to admit that, so far as the main object was con-

cerned, it was a complete failure, for the simple reason that it did not succeed in making my meaning clear to the readers. It was a sad disappointment when I became aware of the fact that my book had this most deplorable of all weaknesses! Fortunately, I had written on the last page an earnest appeal to all readers interested in the subject to correspond with me and inform me of their acquiescence or their doubts and objections. The numerous and eager replies to this request proved that I had at least created an interest in the new ideas. The results were an immense correspondence, many interesting personal acquaintances and new friends, and hundreds of eager discussions of the subject by tongue and pen. In these I finally succeeded in making myself understood. Thus, in spite of the general "failure," the "chosen few" gave me an excellent opportunity to test the strength of my arguments, to estimate the value of the theory in practice and to find out which points need closer attention and clearer elucidation, to the end that a full understanding may be secured.

After about nine months of serious study I resolved to make another attempt to acquaint the general public with my ideas. When I wrote the first treatise I intended it only for a small circle of German friends and acquaintances with whom I

had been discussing the subject. Experience having proved that I can easily reach a large number, I have concluded to write this second book in the English language that it may be accessible to any intelligent inhabitant of this country.

This treatise contains a free translation of all those parts of the German book which describe and criticize the existing conditions of sexual life, with such little changes and additions as appeared expedient. The “constructive” part, however, embracing the elucidations and argumentations in regard to the new theory, and the suggestions for propaganda-work, is so radically different from the German book, that it is impossible to intelligently judge the one by the other.

I am confident that I shall be understood this time! Remember that I claim to offer what, from the present standpoint of humanity, may justly be termed a perfect solution of the Sex, Love and Marriage Questions.

E. F. R.

MAYVILLE, WIS., July, 1896.

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I.

Our Freethinkers and Christian Morality.

A CENSUS of the inhabitants of our country with the object of classification in reference to their religious beliefs and feelings will give us the following results: 1. A comparatively very small and insignificant number of persons imbued with honest and fervent piety as it ruled the world several centuries ago. 2. An equally small number of "stanch" Freethinkers, who freely and openly express their opinions of God, Bible and priests, and who consider it their "duty" to attack this triumvirate wherever they can. 3. Here and there a few, who do not only reject the above trinity, but who are so stiff-necked, that they refuse the reverential bow to many other "holy things" (such as "State," "Duty," etc.) 4. An immense crowd, that does not deserve any other denomination than *Indifferent*.

Do you doubt that genuine religiousness is extremely scarce in this country? Where do you at present see any serious attempt to live according to the teachings of the Christian religion?

Where do you notice even a slight effort to do so? Is it not a rare exception? Would not such a life be the necessary and self-evident result of fervent belief? If after answering these questions you need any further proof, read the sermons of hundreds of ardent ministers of the gospel—there you will find my statement verified.

Do you doubt that there are but few “stanch” Freethinkers? Our own Freethought Agitators everywhere testify to that.

The priest laments the lack of genuine piety, and curses the worldly lusts of his unmanageable flock—the Freethought Agitator is gradually becoming more frequent and fervent in his condemnation of the weakness, the cowardice, the lack of principle, the “reaction” within the ranks of the skeptics and infidels—but in spite of all this, indifference is steadily increasing.

The majority of the indifferent still belong to some church or otherwise confess to some kind of religious belief. With many of them it is merely a matter of custom or of consideration for parents, other relatives, or friends; many seem to think that religion is the only thing which can give a poetic charm to their lives; the mystic ceremonies of the church, the vague but alluring depiction of heaven and its angels cause them pleasant dreams, which make them forget for a while the dullness and dreariness of every-day life. Many others fear that the separation from church and religion will endanger their ethical equilibrium, and that a good moral education for their children would be

impossible. It would be unjust to call all these persons hypocrites. They *do* believe, but they deliberately shun investigation and shrink from any meditation on this belief. They do not want to strengthen it, as that might force them to be consistent in conduct. Neither do they wish to be freed from its bonds, because they think they can see evil, with no counter-balancing good, in doubt or denial. They believe, as we sometimes believe a pretty little story that you tell us. We do not care for the proofs of the affirmation nor for the negation, for the simple reason that the former might impel us to decided action, for which we are not ready, while the latter would destroy a pleasant illusion.

Many persons are bound to the church by commercial, political or social considerations, and some even of these evidently know the trick of conserving their belief in the manner just described. They guard it as the "sacred" element in their feelings, which must be cautiously kept away from any close contact with their intelligence. The great majority of this class, however, deem this rather difficult task superfluous and quite troublesome; they simply *appear* pious so often and so long as they see therein the least advantage for themselves, and if intelligence does conquer the belief?—what of it!—others need not know of this. They are hypocrites, but I am in doubt whether they do any more harm than the persons described before.

It may seem strange that I call all these "indifferent," seeing that so many of them are

extremely loud in their demonstrations and work so ardently for their church. Please remember that I do not mean “indifferent” to the church. I mean that they are indifferent as to any serious meditation on the subject of religion; that the latter influences merely their outward actions, and has no notable effect on their inmost thoughts and feelings; that with them the religious belief does not form the foundation of their conduct—in fact, is nothing but the “means” to gain a certain “object” in *this* life.

An almost equally large number of the indifferent class does not belong to any church nor claim any religious belief. Most of these call themselves Freethinkers, but their “freethinking” does not go any farther than to ridicule God, Bible and priest (quite often even without knowing the real meaning of these terms) and the only advantage which they can discover in their freethought is that they need not pay out any money for “this humbug.” But Yankee “smartness” is employed not only in business; it is equally useful in the propaganda of the American churches. The latter are offering more and more inducements in the way of social entertainment and enjoyment in order to “draw the crowd”; in fact, many churches need only dancing-halls to make them complete public places of amusement. Hence it need not surprise us that many of the so-called Freethinkers (*i. e.*, indifferent No-thinkers) finally consider the fun worth the money—and as to the rites and ceremonies, the going to church and the “faith” demanded, “it

seems," as one young fellow said to me, "awfully silly at first, but you soon get used to it!"

We must admit, therefore, that our agitator is justified in speaking of the present "reaction," but his right to censure the men and women regained by the church for "lack of principle" is not so clear. It should never be forgotten that the pursuit of happiness of one's self is quite a sound principle. I would advise our Freethought Agitator to spend a little less time in exposing the mistakes of the Bible, and the hypocrisy and depravity of the priests, and use the time saved in furnishing the proof that Freethought increases the chances of happiness. By so doing you can gain the immense crowd of indifferents (whatever true religious belief they have they will soon get rid of then without much aid from outside) and the few, who are really pious and fervently religious, will not cause much disturbance.

But will you be able to furnish this proof? I doubt it very much. Your position in this respect is still a very weak one. You have freed yourselves from the belief in the Christian God, the Christian Bible, etc., but you have not freed yourselves from the Christian code of morals, which is derived directly from the former. Hence, in your debates with religious people you often disgust us with such weak remarks as this: "Although we do not believe in God we are just as *moral* as you are!"

You cannot deny that the spirit of Christian morality still reigns supreme in all your teachings,

and that the fact that you have nothing to offer but meaningless sophistries in place of the reward promised by the priests (heaven and eternal bliss) must naturally weaken your case. Your teachers have not the courage to put the "happiness of self" in this life in place of the priest's heaven. No, no, that would be Egoism and that would never do, for "unselfishness," "self-sacrifice," "self-denial," etc., are the ideals not only of the fanatical priests, but of our so-called radicals as well. No wonder, then, that your "moral teachings" are a great failure, that with them you only help to augment cowardice, hypocrisy and falsehood in this world.

It seems to be about time that you liberate yourself from this foolish and disastrous spirit. Have the courage to step up to the priests and their humble servants and say to them: "Our aim, the object of our lives is not, to gain eternal bliss in heaven; neither is it to attain "truth," "justice", "true humanity" or the like—all these are but means to the end—for us there can be but one adequate object and that is our own happiness on earth. Whatever tends to bring us nearer to this we will call "good;" whatever disturbs or destroys this, will be termed "bad," irrespective of your moral code, which of course rests upon an entirely different foundation."

Go to the youth and speak to him thus: "We will not fool and confuse you with such a ridiculous saying as this, that the final object of your life should be the 'happiness of others.' What other

object could there be for you, a Freethinker, than to make this, your own life, as happy and joyful as possible? We therefore ask no more from you than to think about this happiness and how best to obtain it, to consider which actions will tend to increase it and which may endanger it. Beware, however, of that great mistake which some thoughtless persons are apt to make, of thinking only of the happiness of the next hour or of to-day. Always remember that you wish to enjoy for a *long* time; do not deprive yourself of the chance for lasting happiness through one short pleasure."

Look around in this world and investigate; discover where true happiness is enjoyed by human beings and you will soon be convinced that man for *his* highest happiness needs the happiness of *others*, that many actions, which heretofore you considered unselfish, self-sacrificing, and self-denying are in reality the best means to gain the greatest possible happiness of self!, hence are simply wise actions. Give to the young the benefit of your experiences; in place of the lessons in morality teach them how to lead a happy life. In this you have a broader, better foundation for your teachings than the heaven and hell of the priests. As it is, your ethics are still thoroughly imbued with the spirit of a moral code which is weak and almost valueless without the consideration of an eternal life after death. This has reference to almost everything that we call "good" or "evil" in man.

In no other sphere, however, are even the most radical Freethinkers so entirely under the ban of the priests (unconsciously, of course) as in their views of the sexual life of human beings. At all times it has been the aim of proclaimers of religions to get perfect control over sexual desire, the most powerful impulse—as this would give them the best means to lead the great masses and subject them to their will. Even in the oldest religions of which history tells, we notice this very plainly; the effort has manifested itself in the most diverse ways, has caused an immense variety of laws and regulations, but no other religion has dared to undertake such a stern and bitter fight for the absolute subjugation of this impulse as has Christianity. It originated at a time when the rulers, the rich and the genteel, had reached the climax of wild licentiousness, which weakened and unnerved them and which had been caused by the slavish submission of thousands under the despotism of a few (also a result of religion). It was a favorable time to spread the doctrine of the Nazarene, who preached chastity and continence. No wonder that this doctrine met with approbation in the hearts of the many, who were cruelly oppressed and made sport of by the few, whom they had to supply with every possible means for the most excessive gluttony—this doctrine, which bitterly condemned the lusts of the rich, and promised to the poor and the suffering the first place in heaven. It may have been quite welcome even to many of the rulers, as it offered to the enervated and

exhausted debauchee a splended covering for his weakness. This period shows us a transition from the most ardent worship of Venus to the most ignominious rennuciation of all worldly pleasures.

Christian priests demanded humility, resignation, and self-sacrifice; they declared that this short life on earth was but a time of trial and probation in our existence, in which, through humble suffering and self-denial, we could earn eternal bliss in heaven; they condemned all worldly pleasures and lusts; hence consistency demanded that they curse that most passionate of all human impulses, sexual desire. They praised chastity and continence as the highest virtues, fervently recommended severe bodily discipline (self-flagellation, etc.) for the extermination of that awful desire of the flesh. This caused the human spirit to abhor the natural needs and desires of the body. This warfare of the so-called spiritual in man against the physical, the striving of the mind, not merely to control, but to extinguish the natural requirements of the body, generated the most ridiculous ideas and customs. We are not freed from this mad curse yet; many of our so-called Freethinkers even are still suffering under its woeful influence; they still shudder when some moralist frightens them with such awful words as "sensuality," "Inst.," "carnal instinct," and "brute desires".

Of course the priests could not suppress the impulse entirely, and certainly did not mean to, either; they declared that for its satisfaction their benediction was imperatively necessary; without

their blessing it would be the greatest of sins; they demanded that no man should have sexual intercourse with more than one woman; they founded the institution of Christian marriage. We would be mistaken, however, if we should assume that the sex-act in this marriage was considered sacred or as the natural and beautiful outcome of love—no, it was, as ever, the weak yielding to a low, carnal desire. Life-long continence was considered purer and nobler.

In all former religions, as well as in the Mohammedan creed, (which appeared 600 years later marriage laws had no other object than to regulate the possession of the women, man's *property-rights* in them. Some demanded monogamy, *i. e.*, they allowed only one lawful wife, one with whom the husband could beget legitimate children, but in none of these religions did marriage mean for the man sexual association with one woman only.

In the Christian creed it was likewise but a question of possession, but it made this possession, at least so far as sexual intercourse was concerned, a *mutual* possession, *i. e.*, the same so-called faithfulness was demanded of the man as was formerly asked only of the wife. Any sexual intimacy outside of marriage was strictly prohibited. In all other respects, however, they indorsed the old theory of the subordination of the wife to the will of the husband; they also said, "And he shall be thy master and rule over thee." But the fact that in at least one important particular they effected an equalization in the status of man and woman,

augmented the value of the latter as a life-companion, friend, and helpmate of man. When we praise them for this we should not forget, however, that this equalization meant a *lowering* of the status of man, *i. e.*, it brought him nearer to the depraving condition of slavery.

Exclusive sexual intercourse, the family, the joint household, and a general association of interests—all these combined constituted Christian marriage, *i. e.*, gave the only chance for a Christian man to enter into any intimate union with a woman. A large number of the most diverse qualities were therefore of value for marriage. Now, wherever a person found in a human being of the other sex quite a number of these qualities or imagined those exceptionally well developed which appeared of most consequence, he (or she) was liable to conceive a passionate craving for the possession of that particular being. He could possess but one, and to this one he had to give himself up forever—there could be but one choice, and no “backing out”. No wonder, then, that considerate men should deem it exceedingly important that before making this choice the desire should be very passionate, that one being should be valued immeasurably more than all others, and that towards all other women (or men, as the case might be) the chooser should feel nothing but cold indifference. This was necessary as the best security against subsequent useless repentance, against that great calamity, a desire for a change, which could not be granted. Here you have the

origin of that strange love ideal (eternal exclusive love for one human being), which is still causing such ridiculous confusion in many of our most radical minds.

Of course sensual love, mere sexual preference, was quite often the one and only motive for the passionate desire of possession—but it would not do to acknowledge that openly, as that would promptly call forth such epithets as “base” and “carnal,”—hence it had to be concealed behind a screen of mystic and flowery phrases. This caused the awful confusion in the conception of the term “love.”

Our Liberals are not liberated from these superstitions yet, hence we must smile when some of our greatest thinkers, whose mental deeds in other spheres we look upon with admiration, begin to philosophize on the subject of love. What monstrous sophistry they do employ in their spasmodic efforts to reconcile their experiences and the results of their studies in this field with their ideal of love! Why do they not begin with testing the ideal itself as to its origin and its value? This would soon convince them that it is but an illusion with which humanity was led astray by fanatical priests many hundred years ago.

Now let us ask the question: Can Christianity boast of success with this marriage, as to general results? Have the Christians willingly and gladly bowed themselves to the yoke? Have they eagerly obeyed the orders from above? Who dares answer, Yes? Side by side with this glorious institution

of marriage we have seen always and everywhere extensive prostitution in its most depraved and depraving form. The utmost exertions were made to suppress it, laws with the most dreadful punishments were tried, but prostitution defied all efforts, it had come to stay as well as marriage. The priest says that this shows us the miserable depravity of humanity, and his flock, with—I am sorry I must admit it—many so-called Freethinkers, thoughtlessly repeat his words and lament the perpetuity of that “necessary evil!” But not all of them—many thousands are beginning to suspect that it might be well to seriously consider the question whether the human soul is really so utterly depraved, and whether this depravity might not possibly be in that grand old marriage institution itself!

Many centuries have gone by since Christ proclaimed to the world the doctrine, “Love thy neighbor as thyself,” which has been carried out by his pious followers in such a remarkably queer manner. During this time the Christian creed has suffered many significant changes, it has had to concede a great deal to progressing science, but in one sphere—that of the sexual relations—it still exercises almost without diminution, with Freethinkers as well as with its devotees, its malicious and mind-deranging power.

Freethinkers! by a grand and noble struggle you have gradually wrenched from the church nearly all of its legal power—now the time has come to free yourselves from the most harmful

part of its dreary doctrine. Comprehend at last, that we, as Freethinkers, have no reason whatever to despise any part of our bodies or their functions—comprehend, that an impulse, a desire, which is developed in every strong and healthy human being as something self-evidently natural,—the satisfaction of which causes pleasure and joy—which engenders ardent love of man for woman and woman for man—comprehend that this is altogether too good and exalting to be trampled into the mud by fanatic priests. Do not let them scare you any more with their sneering remarks about “base motives,” “carnal instincts,” and “brute desires,” but answer them smilingly, that you are proud of belonging to that highest class of animals which heartily delight in exactly the same physical pleasures as the lower classes, but which nature has endowed with such superior mental and emotional capacities that they are enabled to greatly embellish and enhance each little act of physical pleasure by surrounding and imbuing it with supreme mental and æsthetic enjoyments. Tell them furthermore that you consider this very much better than to be regarded as a kind of spoilt and degenerated “image of God,” who has to fight forever with a malicious devil within himself. And when you consider these serious problems of love and marriage, liberate yourselves from all these foolish superstitions with which you were imbued by a Christian or pseudo-radical education; let one question only decide in each and every case: “Will this increase or dimin-

ish the chances for a happy life?"—and act accordingly.

Thus will you become a powerful agent for the propaganda of Freethought.

Then let the truly pious practice discipline and self-denial as much as they please; their happiness will consist in hope, in fervent trust in a better hereafter; let free men and women enjoy whatever this beautiful world has to offer—and that immense crowd of indifferent no-thinkers will soon be forced to give some serious thought to the subject, and to "choose sides!"



II.

Explanations.

I WILL state at once that the "solution" is simply this: *Freedom!*

That a great many of the existing evils, especially in our sexual affairs, would be promptly exterminated or diminished by freedom, is so self-evident that any person of fair intelligence will concede this without lengthy argumentation. But even our most intelligent men and women are very apt to fear that the remedy would be worse than the evil, *i. e.*, that the dangers caused by freedom would be greater than those which it would remove. It will be my object to prove that these fears are groundless.

"Another Free Love book!" the readers will say, and I suppose that many will make up their minds that nothing more is in store for them than simply a repetition of, and probably an addition to, the arguments for a well-known theory.

I certainly do not object to such a title, but, to avoid misunderstanding, I deem it necessary to call attention to an important difference between this treatise and the present Free Love literature

of the world, with which I am well acquainted. In the latter you will find hundreds of sound and irrefutable reasons for demanding perfect freedom from all legal interference with love relations, and many an able and enthusiastic plea for the rights of the individual in this sphere. These points have been elucidated in an excellent manner by many noble men and women of this country, as well as by the acutest reasoners of almost every other civilized nation, and the subject seems well nigh exhausted. I do not expect, therefore, to add anything particularly valuable to the argumentation on these points.

I am opposed to legal interference; I have positively no use in my theory for any State law; but I do not intend to argue the subject in this treatise. As I wish to show how the small minority should act *now*, I will be compelled to reckon with the laws that do exist, however absurd they may appear to me.

In regard to the rights of the individual in the realm of love as claimed by the most radical of Free Lovers, I will say that I do not intend to prove them—I take them for granted. Those readers who are still laboring under the delusion that they are in duty bound to live “for others,” will have to study other works before they will be able to follow me in my elucidations with that unprejudiced composure of the mind which seems necessary for a clear understanding of this as yet rather difficult subject.

The question which I intend to answer is not a question of rights, but of expediency. I will not show you what you have a right to do, but what you should do in order to lead a happier and a nobler life. I will offer you a new Philosophy of Love, with such propositions and suggestions as I can substantiate by sound arguments.

And now I may say that when I speak of freedom as the solution of the questions named in the preface, I mean not only immunity from all legal interference, but, what I would call far more important, emancipation from superstition and the resulting customs and false ideals.

I may frequently use the terms "free men and women" and "free society." As, according to general usage, these words would imply either infinitely more or considerably less than they will mean as I will employ them here, it is necessary to state that wherever these terms are used in this treatise, they will simply mean that the individuals and groups mentioned are free from superstitions inherited from religion and relating to the love- and sex-life of human beings.

As I wish to propose a radical change of our entire social life, I will have to begin with showing the evils of the present system in order to prove the necessity for a change. Thousands have done this before me—but this subject does indeed seem almost inexhaustible, and I will have to add my share in order to make my book a fairly full treatise on the subject. I will not be able, however, to resist the temptation to relieve the monotony of

these dreary pictures by an occasional glimpse of the “free society,” even before the latter is fairly introduced to the reader.

Shall I follow the example of some writers and offer lengthy excuses for speaking plainly and frankly on such a “delicate” and “tabooed” subject? No, that would be ludicrous hypocrisy now. He must be a great fool indeed who fails to see that the sex-relations have an immense influence for the weal or woe of humanity, and that in this sphere “many things are not as they ought to be;” hence it should be clear to every one who can think somewhat logically, that a thorough investigation of this subject is absolutely necessary if we wish to strive wherever we can for an increase of our chances of happiness.

I will endeavor, however, in each and every case to use the least objectionable expression known to me which will assure a clear and unmistakable understanding of my meaning.

I ask the kind indulgence of the reader for the many faults in the form and style of the treatise, but I also ask the strictest examination, the most rigorous investigation, of the theories and suggestions—and I feel that I am somewhat entitled to both, as my one and only object is to promote our *happiness on earth!*

III.

Our Children.

IN order to show the urgent necessity for a radical change in our sexual affairs, I will begin my subject by drawing a picture of the conditions as they are at present. I will be very careful not to use any more black paint than Truth demands, and will not try to obscure any bright aspect which may present itself, but, alas, the picture will be still a very dark and dreary one. I will also show in each case the changes which would be brought about by the development of a free society. and in this I will take due care not to draw any conclusions except such as would be conceded by every logical thinker to be the self-evident results of freedom. I can assure the reader that we can afford to be extremely liberal towards our opponents in debate.

Let us begin with the children. In what does their education consist, so far as sexuality is concerned? We teach them to be ashamed of and despise certain parts of their bodies. If they should happen to hear of any sexual act, they are taught to consider it as something low, mean, and dirty. They are forbidden to speak about the parts and

their functions; they are advised never to think of them, and to evade the dreadful question wherever it is presented to them. If the unsuspecting, innocent child happens to mention the subject it will promptly hear such exclamations as “Fie, for shame!”, “that’s nasty!” *et al.* This is what is called giving them a “pure” moral education.

Some reader might reply that many intelligent parents have outgrown this “rude” manner of education, and that the necessary “sense of shame” can be instilled into the child in a far more delicate manner, but I can assure you that this will make but very little difference. What you leave out will be promptly furnished by others, by the neighbors, or the playmates in school and on the street.

Mysteries will forever have enticing charm, and the fact that you cover them with mud will not keep the “coarse nature” from exposing them to others at times, nor will it keep the “sensitive nature” from digging for them in secrecy. Notice the defiant exultation with which “little toughy” speaks out the vulgar term for the sex-act, or draws a crude picture of the “nasty thing, which we all have,” when he thinks that only small boys are around. Notice the tremor and flush which passes over sweet little “Mamma’s Pét,” who for the first time is a witness to the awful doings of the “bad boy”—he is shocked and repulsed, but, ah! this bad boy is such a “good fellow” otherwise, he can do such grand and courageous deeds, he tells such queer and interesting stories of the

secret doings of the "big folks!"; one cannot always shun his society. However, "Mama's Pet" is too refined to be "spoilt" by the bad boy; he will never do or say such awful things, but, as he is a smart boy, he cannot help thinking about them. Of course he would not dare speak to anybody about this, but when he is all alone the idea will come to him with ever-increasing fascination "to solve these mysterious problems." As his thoughts are bent so strongly in this direction, ever-obliging nature will promptly direct her creative power mainly to the development of the sexual faculties (neglecting other faculties, of course). The result will be sexual prematurity, so-called "secret vices," which are very liable to be carried to the most extreme excess through sheer ignorance—and ten years later we find that the pretty little fellow, who seemed so sound in mind and body, who was constantly surrounded by the loving care of intelligent parents, has not reached and probably never will reach a condition entitling him to be called "a man," while the "bad boy," the neglected street-urchin has grown into a strong and healthy, though probably a coarse and vulgar, man. And what does the mother of the patient say? What is the considerate diagnosis of the family physician, who dares not speak or perhaps does not know the truth? "Poor fellow, he was 'too smart a child,' his mental faculties developed too rapidly for his weak body!"

The girls are kept aloof from all "immorality" even more strictly and severely than the boys.

The effort to imbue them with a thorough detestation of everything pertaining to the sexual is yet more consistent and persistent than in the case of the boys.

In spite, however, of all your care and vigilance, the children will here and there hear the "forbidden things" alluded to or even openly spoken of by adults. What strange object-lessons they must receive thereby, when they notice that the same thing creates alternately scorn and disgust or ill-concealed desire and delight! To what awful broodings this may lead them if they are neither indolent nor stupid!

In short, the entire education in this respect can have no other tendency than to create either cold and stupid indifference, or morbid sensuality. What may add still more sadness to the picture is the fact that the danger of creating either one of these two extremes (especially the latter) is never greater than when the education in every other respect is worthy to be called first class, that is, where, with an otherwise rational culture of the body, the greatest possible development of the intellect is sought. Such education will encourage independent thinking, love of investigation and experiment, and where all this is combined with "true morality and purity," in the meaning of the present nonsensical code, the chances for sexual health will be indeed very small. This also gives us an explanation of the fact that by far, comparatively, the greatest number of sexually sound

young people are to be found in the so-called lower or uneducated classes.

* * *

How different it will be in free society! There the child from its earliest youth will hear everybody speak about sexual subjects in the same natural, free, and easy manner that they do about other matters. When in its school-work it reaches the study of the human body, the teacher will not leave out important parts, "because it would be indecent to speak about them," but will expect his pupil to "know his lesson" in regard to the sexual organs and their functions as well as any other. There will be none of the old dangers for "Mama's Pet," and no occasion for the "bad boy" to brag of his "knowledge of the world." There will be no great secrets which the parents dare not share with their children, hence it will be an easy matter for the former to protect their dear ones from any perils which may menace their sexual life. Education will of course be free from that disastrous attempt to forcibly and deceitfully suppress a healthy natural impulse; the only object will be to induce the greatest possible harmoniousness in the development of all faculties of the mind and body. For the child there will be no piquant charm to incite to morbid brooding in secrecy, no great mysteries to be solved in solitude, no ominous allusions to enflame the imagination—in short, no provocatives to prematurity, hypocrisy, weakness, and sexual disease.

IV.

Our Young Men.

IN the previous chapter I called attention to the fact that our present foolish customs bring great dangers to the boy and girl even long before the normal time of puberty. I will gladly admit that for many a boy with a strong body and an average intellect these dangers may hardly exist or that he may be easily saved from them—although many students of the subject assert that an almost general sexual prematurity may be noticed in the so-called higher classes. We will now consider the status of the youth after puberty. The virtuous boy notices suddenly, and with increasing wonder and amazement, that all those parts and acts which heretofore appeared to him as the lowest, meanest and dirtiest, now possess a peculiar charm, that the thought of them causes him a rather agreeable prickling sensation. It is the awakening of that natural and powerful impulse, sexual instinct, which even the most formidable preaching of so-called morality cannot effectually suppress in a strong and healthy boy. I want to show to you now that, no matter how, under existing conditions, the youth deals with

this impulse, each and every possible way will bring serious injury either to his character or his body.

1. If he is a noble, conscientious fellow with a strong character he will try to strictly conform to the rules of morality; he will exert himself to the utmost to suppress his supposed depravity (the pleasurable feelings caused by erotic thoughts)—in which he will of course often fail. His condition is described thus by a German physician: “Pursued by wild erotic images, tormented by frequent erections, the ardent youth fights with courage and noble intent to defend the citadel of his chastity; he seeks refuge in his studies and in severe physical exercise.” (Poor fellow, instead of enjoying love, he falls into morbid and dreary philosophizing on the subject!) Ah, it is a hard struggle, and many finally become weak and surrender; they will then belong to class two, which we will consider hereafter. “If he is invincible and wins the battle, then the strong sexual desires as well as the erections will gradually disappear; ‘he has conquered the enemy!’ But do not forget that we can never triumph over such strong natural impulses without severe punishment. A vague feeling of restlessness and dissatisfaction with the world will come to our hero, he will lose his cheerfulness and mental energy, will get nervous and fretful and in almost every case will be tormented by indigestion (that faithful companion of mental troubles); weak and exhausted, it will be impossible for him to fix his close attention on the

subjects which he would like to study; his mind, formerly buoyant and vivacious, has become dull and indolent; instead of being moved with the impetuous objective passion of youth, he is timid and bashful, giving himself up to morbid subjective speculations, so that even the mere thought of female society may be repulsive to him."

Is that the reward for good behavior? No, it is merely the punishment for a foolish and unnatural way of living. If you should have the least doubts concerning the existence of the great evils which must follow strictly enforced continence in a strong and healthy young man, I would advise you to study them or to ask any conscientious physician, who makes this subject his specialty. You will soon know a long list of evil effects of continence, of which involuntary emission is by far the least significant. If this last is neither the result of an organic defect (as it may be caused sometimes by extreme malpractice) nor of a forced and artificial exciting of erotic sensations, that is, if it is experienced by the young and healthy man and is associated with a delightful sensation, it is no evil at all, but is simply the manner in which nature "helps itself". Our "pure" and "chaste" youth, however, is filled with horror and dismay when such a "dreadful thing" happens to him. He has exerted his will power to the utmost to banish those luring sirens from his troubled brain and now, behold! one wild dream has baffled all his efforts! He now is convinced that disease has been added to his "depravity". Will he go to his

parents or his friends for advice? Oh, no, he would not pollute those “pure” dear ones with such vile things! Will he consult the honored family physician? Oh, no, the “sense of shame” will keep him from that also. He may go to some quack, whom nobody knows, or he may study, trembling with fear and shame, those mysterious advertisements in our dailies—and everywhere he will read: “Lost! Lost!”

2. The second group represents those young men who are equally virtuous and conscientious with the last-named, but who have a weaker character. They feel from the beginning that it will be impossible for them to come out victorious in the battle against these strange new feelings. They soon become acquainted with that satisfaction of the desires which is so extremely easy and convenient and so extremely secret and safe—onanism.

It is not necessary to draw a picture of the evil results of this so-called self-abuse. Thousands have done so, and I can assure you that they have used more of the black paint in their work than was necessary or expedient. I will call attention, however, to the fact that the mode of agitation against this “vice” which is almost generally adopted by our would-be reformers in this field, is about the most nonsensical and the most harmful which can be imagined. They begin with calling it a “dreadful, nasty vice” or a “horrible crime”—and this can have no other effect than to take from the majority of young men a great part of

their self-esteem and self-respect (as but few can claim perfect innocence in this.) The next move is to scare the youth with the most horrible predictions, so that the agony of fear and dreadful apprehensions deprives him of that which is most necessary for resistance—courage and self-reliance. Finally, some general good advice is given for the promotion of health, such as “early to bed and early to rise”, frequent walks in fresh air, healthful physical labor, gymnastics, and so forth. This advice is salutary, and if followed will certainly increase health, and good health will increase the power of resistance; this we must admit, but these innocent reformers seem to be perfectly unconscious of the fact that good health not only increases the power of resistance, but that it also increases the power of the “devil within ourselves” which has to be resisted!

Let us stop these fatal fooleries. Under present conditions it is absurd to speak of onanism as that “dreadful” secret sin, and our moralists are not at all justified in calling it a vice, much less a crime. An honest and truthful man would say to the youth: “If you fervently believe in the present moral code, if you have the desire to be a moral and virtuous man, a generally respected person, you will be obliged to choose this mode of satisfaction of your sexual desires, for all other ways will lead you to far greater or at least more striking offenses against morality. As it may be some consolation to you, I will inform you that all our ‘nice’ and ‘virtuous’ young men, who despise all

“immorality”, do the same thing. Take due care, however, never to submit to any whim, to yield only to the spontaneous and irresistible demands of nature; never satisfy the desire before it has become very strong (of course without ever willfully doing anything to provoke and augment this desire.) As you wish to ‘sin’ as little as possible, it is practical to center your thoughts as much as you can on prosaic things, which have no connection with love or lust. For this purpose nothing is better than to interest yourself as early as possible in business speculations. In your ‘frequent walks for health’ calculating on a good money-making-scheme is about the best way to keep your thoughts from that decidedly dangerous, because so indiscreetly suggestive, study of nature! and figuring out a tough example in Dollars and Cents just before going to sleep will do good service in keeping that ‘luring siren’ from your dreams! In this way you may preserve fairly good health; you will lose hardly any time through this little ‘evil’; you can devote it all to making money, and when you have scraped together a sufficient amount you can choose wisely and deliberately, as a ‘pure’ man, the ‘pure’ maiden for the holy state of matrimony—and satisfy yourself to your heart’s content, for what formerly would have been a dreadful sin is now ‘marital duty!’ You will be praised as a smart and sensible man, as a strictly moral character, as a model of virtue, and you will feel that you have a right to look down with scorn and contempt upon those

low beings who are led into such foolish actions by their 'base' and 'carnal' desires! Yes, even to old age you may retain such a pure soul that one roguish wink of a piquant priestess of Venus may be sufficient to bring the flush of shame and indignation to your cheeks."

Of course there are some drawbacks to this mode of living. It will give you a rather cowardly, mean, and unmanly character; you will be very much inclined to look only at the dark side of things; you will not be able to appreciate the beauties of nature and art, which give to others so much real enjoyment, and the jovial "men of the world" will ridicule you and laugh at you. This jeering may not cause you much annoyance, however, as you will have the proud feeling of being a "better man," who is entitled to sit in judgment upon these "vagrants."

But suppose you should wish to be a man in the full sense of the word, hale, vigorous, and courageous, and remain thus up to old age; that you should desire to retain for life the susceptibility to the beautiful in art and nature, and the cheerfulness of mind and vigor of body essential to a jovial enjoyment of life, and yet should wish to be a moral, virtuous man in the meaning of the society code of to-day, and would not stoop to hypocrisy—then no honest, truthful man can give you any other answer than that it is utterly impossible!

3. The third class is composed of young men who satisfy their sexual desire in so-called "houses

of ill-fame." Much has been said and written about the awful results of prostitution, but it seems that but very few have realized that by far the greatest damage done by this evil consists in the ruinous effect which it must have on the character of our young men. Every one of them is forced to the meanest hypocrisy, if he shares the prevalent moral view he must lose his self-respect if he goes to such places, and every student of human nature will admit that loss of self-respect produces more real criminals than any other cause.

4. What I have said of class three is true, even in a greater degree, of class four, *i. e.*, of the young men who satisfy their desires in real love relations (or at least with previously "chaste" women). These "seducers," "libertines", "Don Juans" (or whatever other pretty name you may choose to give them) have the advantage of a far more agreeable satisfaction, but to be successful in their pursuit and to save themselves from the condemnation and persecution of the people they need a still greater proficiency than class three in the arts of hypocrisy, lying and cheating.

5. To be exhaustive, I must mention a fifth class, that is, those men whose physical nature (which may be normal and healthy otherwise) lacked from the beginning the sexual instinct (as a result of some "strange freak of nature" I suppose) or in whom this instinct is so weak that its suppression will cause neither trouble nor harm. These are extremely rare exceptions, and it would not be necessary to further consider them if it were

not for the fact that quite a number of persons honestly believe that such a state should be welcomed as a high degree of "purity." These fanatics, who are mostly women, even go so far as to propose, that by a "pure" conception (that is, without pleasurable sensations), and a "pure" life of the woman during pregnancy, and non-stimulating diet we should try to increase the number of men and women (especially the former of course), who would be free from these "base" and "carnal" desires! In a pious Christian this is no more than consistency, but what shall we think of those women who seriously recommend this theory and still have the audacity to call themselves "Free-thinkers"! I will not argue the question of purity at present, but I will inform these persons that, if they should be successful in their experiments (and I have no doubt that a great deal can be achieved in this direction) they would find that a great many of those qualities which they consider good and noble in man had disappeared with the sexual desire.

6. As the sixth and last class, I have to name those men who enter into marriage immediately after they have attained puberty (which will be at the age of 13 to 18.) These are also very rare exceptions, and I do not believe that any one of my readers will claim that these present us any pleasing and ennobling pictures.

These observations show us that, under present conditions, there is positively no way open to the healthy young man which will not seriously

injure him in some manner. In these enumerations I was thinking of Freethinkers only. Of course Christians would have to be classified the same way, but it cannot be denied that for the truly religious man there are some relieving considerations in this dilemma. For him the lusty desire with which he is tormented, is that awful "sin of the flesh," invented by the "devil," who has at all times endeavored to seduce "weak" mortals. The minister will inform him that "we are all sinners"—and that must be a great consolation to him; when he confesses his "sin" to the priest he will be told that nearly all young men are tormented by this "lust of the flesh", but that with humble confession, frequent prayers, and the strong and sincere effort of resistance he may still be a good and pious man. This will save him from losing his self-respect, and will give him the necessary courage and self-reliance to guard against excess.

I ask you, Freethinkers, to whom do your young men go for advice in their secret troubles? Can you deny that the young Catholics are better situated in this respect? They confess to their priests and these are generally smart men, who "know the world" and who can give them better advice than the young Freethinker can get from the family doctor-book or the "Youth's Friend" of the quack. But suppose that he should come to you, that he should ask your leaders for information—what advice will they give to the hale and healthy youth of nineteen or twenty, whose vigor and buoyancy demand an outlet for his natural

impulses? Will they say, “marry” and be indifferent to the bitter smile of the young man, who can barely support himself, or—(if he should be one of the few financially able to marry)—who has not yet found that “superior being” who could make the thought of binding himself forever appear agreeable? If they are pressed very hard for a definite answer, they will expound their theory of general government (be it initiative and referendum, Single-Tax, Socialism, or Anarchy) and say thus: Let us better our economic conditions, then you will be all-right, then every youth and every maiden who loves can promptly marry (many are bold enough even to add: “and unmarried when they cease to love”) without being hindered by any economic considerations! Unfortunately, these reforms cannot be brought about in a day or two. Hence the advice is not advice at all, and our disappointed youth leaves with a sad face and “sneaks through” as smoothly as circumstances will allow.

Suppose now, that you, dear reader, should firmly believe in any one of the above theories; would you not concede at once that we will need able and honest men, full of strength, courage and perseverance, to bring about the desired change? Let me ask you a question: How can you expect ever to get the necessary number of such men together so long as foolish superstitions force almost every one of them at times to play the part of a miserable hypocrite, sneak, and liar?

How beautifully these dreary pictures will be transformed in free society! Before the time of puberty sexual subjects will have only the same interest for the boy that any other lesson for study has, as they will no longer be tempting "forbidden fruit." After he has reached sexual maturity, he will promptly be conscious of a strong desire for sexual intercourse and will wish to satisfy the same in the most agreeable manner, that is, with a sympathetic human being of the opposite sex. As almost all the women will have the same wish and as he will be free to choose from all of them, without the least danger of interfering with any right or claim to any one of them, without the danger of losing his liberty by the association, it may appear extremely easy to gain his object. But the other men will have the same desires and the same rights and the sexes are fairly equal in number, hence it will be necessary for our young man to exert himself to gain the affection of a woman. The necessity of such wooing will keep the youth from indulgence before the full development of his sexual nature. The impulse must have grown sufficiently strong to urge him to vigorous action, to the ardent and persistent wooing without which he would have but little chance of success. In free society onanism will not be called a crime, no, not even a vice; it will be described simply as that satisfaction which gives the least pleasure and is most likely to cause harm. Unless he has lost all faith in himself no youth will ever think of satisfying his desire in this manner, he will

leave that to the world-despising recluse and the blunt-witted idiot. Neither will he think of buying the service of a woman for the purpose. Why not? For the reasons that the pleasures received would be so much less, and because he would dread the derision of his comrades, who would pity him for the inability to gain love by his personal qualities. Hence he will soon find a sympathetic woman, whose spontaneous desire meets his own. As free human beings they will enjoy love's delights without any false sense of shame, without self-reproach, without concern for the future, without being forced to any enslaving "relation" and—what is not at all unimportant—without having their pleasure disturbed by any artificially cultivated feeling of aversion to and disgust for the sexual function. Realizing the high degree of pleasure which this function affords them, they cannot fail to think it beautiful, and will prize the respective parts of their bodies as noble organs, well worthy of tender care and attention. Their true sense of shame will keep them from ever mentioning these organs or their functions with the spiteful scorn and disdain which is customary to-day, and they would treat the man who would dare speak thus as a contemptible weakling or eunuch.

I suppose it is high time to reassure the anxious souls who will ask, "What of the children, the necessary results of these relations?"

Well, in all the lower classes of animals impregnation would probably always be the "necessary result," but as we happen to belong to the highest

class and are endowed with intellect, we are not satisfied to let "instinctive" passion govern us, but have exerted our mental energy in all spheres to get the natural forces under our control and to use them to suit our own purpose. Even the sexual organs and their functions have not been too "sacred" to be exempt from the scrutinizing investigation of our students, and so they found, many years ago, that even these "forces" and their effects need not be ruled either by the will of God or of non-intellectual nature, but can be made subject to the will of man! (very much to the displeasure of priest and statesman, as it seems.)

... I refer to the preventive check, to which I have concluded to devote the next chapter.

V.

The Preventive Check.

IN a discussion on this subject I had a good hearty laugh at the inconsistency of a man, who claimed to be highly educated, who demanded continence from men, who adored vestals, but who was opposed to the preventive check, "because it is unnatural!"

To call enforced continence "natural" is too absurd an assertion to require any argumentation. I suppose, however, that it would have to be termed natural if we simply followed our "instincts" and procreated as many human beings as possible. But nature has likewise given us intellect and it must seem but natural to use this also.

If we use it to influence the people to blindly ignore a law of nature, which has been known for thousands of years, if we use it in an effort to artificially and forcibly suppress a natural impulse, which engenders love, and the satisfaction of which causes pleasure and joy—then I call this utterly foolish and the resulting actions—unnatural, or anti-natural, mystic, theological.

If, however, we use our intellectual faculties to gain knowledge of as many as possible of the never-changing laws of nature, if we utilize this knowledge to the best of our ability for a happy and healthy development of the human race—then I call this good and wise and *natural*.

But my excellent man has another reason for his objection to preventive checks. He says that with them we “frustrate the will and intention of nature,” and winds up with the grand words: “It won’t do to try to fool nature!”

I answer thus: “As you dare to give us a theory of the intentions of nature, I will take the same liberty. Here is my theory: Mother Nature’s first intention was to give to humanity no more reproductive power than was just sufficient for the preservation and a healthy development of the race; but she happened to have a vivid dream, which gave her a presentiment of the strange and crazy notions which Christian and other priests might try to force on poor mankind, and she soliloquized thus: “Ah, you may be smart men, but it won’t do to try to fool me! I will frustrate *your* intentions! I will give to humanity such a superabundance of reproductive power, I will make the sexual impulse so strong and its gratification so delicious, that all your promises of eternal bliss as a reward for so-called ‘purity,’ all your curses of the ‘awful desire of the flesh,’ all your menacing with the tortures of hell, all your persecutions and punishments on earth (with the assistance of legal tyrants and legal courts)—will not extinguish it.

nor even *regulate* it to suit your purposes! If they should happen to have such an immense superfluity of it then that they will use the greater part of it for their pleasure only—well, what of it! My *object* is attained, I will not begrudge them the extra pleasure!” I think we two ought to be very thankful to old Mother Nature for changing her mind; if she had carried out her first plan, we two would not be here to enter into such a pretty debate on the question: “What was her intention?”

The above is a translation of the only argument against the objection to preventives which is contained in my German book. One of my critics, to whom I had sent the manuscript before publication, wrote to me as follows: “I heartily enjoyed your splendid answers to the ‘highly educated man,’ but this subject is of such vast importance that you should have devoted a special chapter and more serious argumentation to it. The most absurd superstitions in regard to the prevention of conception are still prevalent in the minds of many of our most radical thinkers.” Unfortunately, I did not heed the advice. I thought that these superstitions were due only to the fact that those who held them had given but very little thought to the subject and that, once realizing the immense value and importance of the preventive, they would promptly and easily conquer this weakness. Alas! I was mistaken, for everywhere I meet these foolish scruples, this dread of scheming and revengeful nature!

To some poetic minds, perceiving the grandeur and the beautiful harmony of the universe, it may give pleasure to draw an entrancing picture of the origin and the original intentions regarding all this; it may suit their fancy to imagine a god or a thousand gods and goddesses as ruler or rulers—but, aside from the pleasure of a fantastic dream, or the embellishment of our language with fine allegorical phrases, such illusions can have no value. We are all convinced that the laws of nature are eternal and forever unchangeable, that the same cause will always have the same effect. From this it follows that, whatever the *original* intention may have been, at the time when these eternal laws are supposed to have been introduced, after they were once introduced any further “will” of the maker of the laws (call him or it God, Nature, Devil or whatever else you please) is simply meaningless—hence we say, “Nature has no intentions!” Furthermore, as it is utterly impossible for us to conceive of any such “beginning,” of any making of such laws, we must believe that the eternity of these laws extends both ways and so we promptly add, “and it never had any either!” Have you ever thought of it, what a ludicrous absurdity it is for a man to firmly believe in the eternal immutability of nature’s laws (all Free-thinkers and a great percentage of the Christians do believe this) and at the same time fear the “revenge of nature for frustrating its intentions?”

If a river does not flow in a direction to suit our purposes, we change its course; if a hill or

mountain is hindering us, we simply shovel it away, and we would laugh at the fool who should seek to scare us with the ominous remark that we were "frustrating the intention of nature!" Several centuries ago, when a new enterprise in any field was considered, many people were afraid of the venture because it might interfere with the will of the Creator. We "civilized" people have outgrown these superstitions—except when it comes to our own body; there we are still trembling with the same old fear. To a great extent our doctors of medicine are to blame for this; so many of them still like to use the expression, "acting against the will of nature." Of course I am well aware of the fact that most of them really mean nothing else by this than "acting in ignorance of the laws of nature," but it would be wise to beware of such false expressions as the former; the example of the highly educated man mentioned before shows us to what ridiculous delusions this may lead men and women.

After having reassured ourselves that no willful revenge of nature is to be dreaded, the question of the necessity or expediency of a preventive check is in order.

Ninety years ago Thomas R. Malthus explained to the world how over-abundantly nature has endowed almost every organic being. He proved to us that with free and unchecked opportunity for development a single species could soon cover the entire earth: furthermore, that, if the species of man should use its entire reproductive power

without forcibly limiting its resulting numbers, very soon there would not be nourishment enough to furnish them all more than a meager subsistence. Whatever opinion you may have of the conclusions drawn from them by Malthus, you will have to admit the correctness of these premises. I certainly do not claim that there are any too many human beings in this world at present—no, we even have plenty of room for more—but I do claim that this favorable circumstance is not traceable to any destructive struggle with “other classes of animals” (this secures a certain equilibrium in the lower classes, but the human race has attained such a superiority that this fight causes comparatively hardly any losses on its side); that it is not due to any particular weakness of the reproductive instinct, but that we owe it merely to the fact that the human race has at all times forcibly limited its numbers by a great variety of “natural” and “unnatural” checks. Therefore, I further claim that the question before us is not by any means whether we shall limit population or not, for we have always done so and will and must do so in future; the question to decide is simply this: Which is the *best* check?

Herewith I give you a list of the “checks” which are in vogue at present: War, pestilence, poverty, famine, crime and its punishment, stillbirths, disease caused by pre-natal influences, neglect of children, abortion, and—what is probably more effective than all the others taken together—

excess, perversity, and secret vice on the one side, and enforced continence on the other.

Many diverse propositions are made for bettering the condition of human society, but every humane person will promptly concede that each of the above-named checks, with the exception of the last one, continence, is an evil and should be eradicated. Hence to many minds continence remains as the one and only permissible check. We propose instead the preventive check, that is, full gratification of the impulse in a natural and normal manner, but with the use of scientific means for preventing conception wherever the latter is not desired, and we claim that each and every fact and argument which could possibly be worthy of consideration speaks in favor of our check.

Seeing now that, for every logical thinker, the question is reduced to the single choice of Continence or the Preventive Check (all other checks having been rejected as evils by unanimous vote) it must seem that it was hardly necessary to argue the question of "nature's intentions", for he must be foolish indeed who could consider continence "more natural", or who could hold that nature invented a certain instinct or impulse for the purpose of having it suppressed.

But let us stop these foolish quibbles about what nature intended and investigate instead the laws of nature that have relation to our subject:

1. Every important organ of our body after its full development manifests a need for activity, and a continued neglect or suppression of the im-

pulse is always certain to cause a serious irritation of the entire system.

2. Regular use of any one of our organs strengthens it; within certain limits, the more it is used the greater its capacity becomes. Up to a certain degree this will be truly beneficial to the entire body. After this stage is passed, the "excessive use" will necessitate an extraordinary development of the organ. Nature promptly tries to rise to the emergency, even if other organs must be neglected on that account; but, as all of our organs are closely allied to and dependent upon each other, continued persistence in undue demands on one organ (that is, over-exertion) must bring on a sudden collapse because other gradually debilitated organs will finally fail to render the necessary support.

3. Non-use debilitates the organ and also gradually weakens the impulse of activity after the crisis is passed. This crisis, the physical irritation of the entire system caused by resisting the craving for activity of an organ, will last only until nature has had time to conform to the circumstance.

4. Healthy living means therefore a normal and regular exercise of all organs of the body. It is just as absurd to suppose that inactivity of fully developed sexual organs might be equivalent to a net gain in physical power as it would be to resolve not to exert the muscles of your arms in order to save the strength which is in them (for use by some other part of the body, as the continence

people would argue), or to try to use your brains as little as possible for a few years in order to be a wise man afterwards!

5. Non-use of an organ, neglect of a certain faculty, or the effort for less than normal use, if continued for several generations in any race, will result in a "characteristic" peculiarity of that race consisting in a general weakness of the respective organ and a general lack of its full development. Example: The "civilized" human races are particularly "weak and inferior" beings so far as the sense of smell is concerned, for the simple reason that they have sorely neglected for many centuries the intelligent use of their nose. For some uncivilized tribes as well as for all animals this organ is of immense importance for their guidance and safety, while our race, depending more upon its higher intelligence, did not need it so much, and hence it now appears to many of us as a rather superficial ornament, which causes us more annoyance than pleasure or benefit. We did not use it and so it came to pass that it is of no use.

Sections three and five are apparently favorable to the theory of those men and women who wish to exterminate sexual desire as nearly as possible in order to make continence easier and to secure "morality" and "purity," but these persons should not forget that, excepting the desire for food and drink, the sexual desire is the strongest impulse in human nature. The "crisis" in this case would be a rather long and troublesome one. However, there is another law of nature which

should cause every humane thinker to promptly reject this theory :

6. The sexual organs are closely allied to all other organs of the body and the weakness of the former is sure to have a debilitating effect on the latter. An especially direct *rapprochement* exists between the sexual organs and the brain and the influence of either on the other is very great and of immense importance. A healthy condition and a normal exercise of the sex-organs have a tendency to create buoyancy of the spirit, courage, power of endurance, and other very desirable qualities and conditions, while sexual weakness or the lack of sexual desire will cause the contrary effects and bring about many other dreary results with which even the moralist would not be pleased.

The question might be asked: How much "indulgence" would be required (or allowed as the case may be) to constitute an average, normal activity of healthy sex-organs? I would answer: In a free society the "natural impulse" of the organs would give each person a pretty distinct and correct answer. Under favorable circumstances a healthy stomach will give you very clear and wise orders when to eat and when to stop, but when you are near starving half of the time, when, after a long fasting, you must gorge yourself with all kinds of foul food, when during all this time you see around you a great variety of tempting delicacies—then the "natural impulse" will soon become decidedly unreliable. The existing unnaturally constrained and perverse sexual con-

ditions have caused so much abnormal appetite on one side and so much weakness and disgust on the other, that it is utterly impossible to draw any reliable conclusions from the ordinary person's observation and experience as to what might constitute an average normal indulgence. The history of the human race, however, as well as the study of all other organic beings, can leave no doubt in our minds that it will always be considerably more than will be necessary for the purpose of propagation. It is possible, however, that some of my readers have not entered into this study and so still have some doubts as to this last assertion; nevertheless, they will have to admit that, in order to regain a normal condition of any organ, it is an absolute necessity to give to it an opportunity for natural and normal activity.

From these considerations we must draw the conclusion that continence is not an advisable check, that it is even more disastrous than several of the other checks mentioned in my list. Hence there is but one left—the Preventive Check.

There are quite a number of different modes of prevention known to-day. The study of the operations of nature will teach you to choose that mode which allows full and mutual gratification of the sexual impulse in man and woman in the most natural and beneficial manner.

Many years ago human intelligence discovered simple means, which are available to all, easily understood and easily applied, which allow perfect, "unchecked," natural and healthful activity to all

sexual organs of man—which allow the same to all parts of the sexual organism of woman with the exception of the womb—and which at the same time place the decision of the question, “procreation or no procreation?” absolutely under the control of the independent woman or of the husband and wife.

Here my opponent thinks that he has caught me at last: “‘With the exception of the womb,’ indeed!—Why, the womb is also an organ demanding activity, and you want to prevent this activity by unnatural and artificial means!”

I must ask him to remember, however, that we have to choose between the preventive check and continence, and I hope he will not claim that the latter gives any more activity to the womb. If he simply wishes to state that we have not reached the ideal condition with the introduction of the preventive check, that we should strive to bring about such condition, that economic considerations will not prevent a single woman from satisfying that “natural impulse,” the desire for maternity, then I will promptly answer, I am with you, once and forever!—and I am not without hope that we can reach such a state of affairs, for, although convinced that even in the ideal society it would be very unwise to increase population to the full extent of procreative power, that is, to leave the question of offspring entirely to the “chances” of sexual intercourse, I am confident that it would be the wisest and safest course to

leave it absolutely and peremptorily to the desire for maternity.

But if my opponent should mean to say that we should have perfection or remain idle, that we should either satisfy all of our natural impulses or none of them, then I would promptly denounce him as a fool and a coward, who merely uses his ideal as an excuse for his indolence and inactivity.

What grand words these moralists and continence-enthusiasts employ in advocacy of their theories! "Manly self-control," "superiority of the spirit over the body," "will-power controlling the base impulses of the body," "the spiritual self-control of the passions elevates man above the beast," are some of their pet catch-phrases. For many hundred years humankind was tortured with such teachings, but the suffering was somewhat relieved by the fervent hope in a better hereafter. With sickening disgust we notice, however, that Freethinkers, yes, even so-called "Free-Lovers" thoughtlessly repeat such expressions. It appears as a rather queer "elevation," indeed, when you see that there is not another class of animals on this globe which is as unclean and unhealthy, debilitated, degenerated, and unhappy sexually as the "civilized" human races! Self-control is certainly a noble thing, when used for a noble purpose. It is beautiful and noble to use it to suppress the disastrous feelings of hate and revenge; it is truly wise to use it even to calm the noble passions of love and affection sufficiently to enable us to consider intelligently the immediate

and remote consequences of possible actions, but when we observe men and women, who dare to call themselves Freethinkers, preaching self-control, not to gain strength and vigor of mind and body, not to gain joy and happiness for themselves and others, but simply to have the satisfaction of hearing the priests and their flocks say of them condescendingly, "They are good, pure and moral *although* they are Freethinkers"—that is indeed a sad and humiliating spectacle!

I will tell you what will truly elevate us above the beasts of the field: Love and enjoy more and hate and kill less; never let our "instinctive" passions enslave us, but employ our superior mental power in thinking before we act; refuse to be satisfied with the "consolation" that our "superfluous" fellow-beings will be promptly starved and murdered in the savage battle of life, and use our intelligence to bring about such a condition that every babe which henceforth opens its eyes to this beautiful world shall be greeted with love and delight as a welcome guest!

The argument in this chapter on the "necessity and expediency" of the preventive check applies to the general public. To the man or woman who favors the emancipation of woman, freedom in love, and the cause of liberty in general, the preventive check shows so many other enormous advantages that only a hopeless dullard could fail to see them. It is not necessary to enumerate them here.

The objections to the check which are not due

to gross superstition, such as “inconvenience,” “offending the æsthetic feeling,” and “prosaic and annoying interference with the ecstasy of love,” are altogether too insignificant compared with the immense importance of the subject and the transcendant benefits of the check, to require any lengthy argument. I can assure the reader that in less than a month these little difficulties would be minimized so much in any intelligent “free society,” that even the most sensitive nature would not be seriously disturbed by them.

We are all the slaves of custom to some extent, but when we are inspirited with enthusiasm for a great and noble cause we learn very quickly to conquer such weaknesses.



VI.

The Girls.

AFTER a rather long digression, which I hope some of my readers will have deemed somewhat superfluous, we will return to the investigation of present society, and will now consider the sexual life of the girls. In general, the dangers and injuries caused by our present pernicious system are the same in the life of the girls as in that of the boys, but two important factors have finally caused a material difference, making separate consideration appear necessary. 1. The young man is expected to "go out into the world," while the "ideal sphere" of woman is still the "home and family," hence the male child from earliest youth is allowed considerably more freedom in his intercourse with the outside world than is the female. Courage and energy, fearless exploration and experiment, prompt attack on an enemy—these are ideals preached in some manner to almost every boy, while a certain degree of meekness, timidity, and bashfulness are still believed to belong among the "graces of womanhood." For these reasons it is far easier in the case of a girl to keep the

thoughts removed from all sexual subjects, to consistently foster the abhorrence of everything connected with sex-life, than in the case of a boy.

2. The production and accumulation of seminal fluid in healthy young men gives them such a powerful and unmistakable "explanation" that not one of them can for any long time be in doubt as to "what he wants," while the signs in the female organism are not so explicit.

These two factors give us an explanation of the following fact: While the effort to prevent or at least to retard and weaken the development of sexuality through the medium of education has been a general failure as far as men are concerned, it has been somewhat successful with quite a number of women; that is to say, there are many young maidens, who are not called invalids, who are never conscious of any desire for sexual intercourse. Many a woman reaches old age, sees her children and grandchildren grow up without a clear conception or even knowledge of the sexual impulse and its immense power and influence. As she has never enjoyed the delights of sensual love in any worthy manner, the act may appear to her simply as a kind of a "necessary evil;" she may denounce the men as miserable weaklings for allowing this "base" impulse to influence them so much in their actions. Her ignorance must make her a strict and stern moralist.

Such a moralist must be considered as an honest and innocent ignoramus; her accusations are certainly ridiculous and unjust, but she is

right in one respect—men *are* miserable weaklings, not because “they are all animals!” (as such women like to say), but because instead of open and manly explanation they prefer silence and active deceit in their cowardly dread of ghosts and phantoms!

But let us return to the modern young girl, who receives a strictly moral and pure education. (Whether a Christian or a Freethinker *a la mode*, the education will be about the same, except that in the latter case it is even more strict and stern and is devoid of the hope of reward and the solace of confession and atonement.) It would seem that every mother must be forced to some open explanations when that distinct sign of beginning sex-life, menstruation, shows itself for the first time; but no, she will simply say, “Never mind, every girl must suffer that.” She will give some superficial advice regarding the treatment of the body during the time and will see to it that the “sense of shame” keeps her girl from letting others know about her condition, or inquiring of others concerning the disquieting mystery.

Well, our modest young girl is thoroughly ashamed that she has such “vile” parts with such “vile” functions, and the least allusion to any sexual subject will bring the blush of confusion to her cheeks and fill her with horror and disgust. Thanks to the care and vigilance of loving parents, she will remain a “pure” and “moral” girl, blessed with all the “graces of true womanhood.”

But if she is fairly healthy the natural impulse is bound to show itself in some inexplicable manner. The young maiden notices a strange change in her feelings towards the male sex, men's society begins to have a peculiar charm for her; she is crazy for novels and love-stories; she is an enthusiastic admirer of the amorous songs of our great poets; in short, she is craving for love without having the least understanding of what that word implies. What a strange and prickling sensation it will cause her when she reads in her favorite novel such passages as the following: "A mysterious charm seemed to work upon her—he treated her shamefully and she once thought she hated him; she did not agree with his ideas, did not approve of his actions—and yet, a 'mysterious and inexplicable something' seemed to draw her to him, and when he looked at her so longingly a sweet tremor would pass through her body and thrill her with strangely agreeable sensations; finally she confessed to herself: It is love, sweet powerful love, of which our poets sing!" And when the crisis of the story is reached, the declaration of love, the ardent embrace, the glowing kisses—then our young reader will also feel a sweet tremor passing through her body and she will be conscious of a great longing for such happiness as this!

How we would shock her if we should tell her the truth!—if we should inform her that the cause of all this beautiful love is simply that which to her is the lowest, meanest, and most disgusting of

all things, sexuality; that without such sexuality this ardent embrace, these burning kisses, would not have been possible!

“Ah, happy dreams of youth! Who could be so cruel as to rob sweet innocence of her beautiful illusions?” That will be your exclamation, but you know very well that, in spite of all your care and vigilance, it will happen sometimes that a sudden flash of light will disclose the truth and blast the fond hopes of a happy and confiding maiden. The bitter contempt of the world which this must arouse in every girl who has received a “moral” education will lead her in one of the following directions: She may decide that, as love is but an illusion, it is best to make use of this “base” desire to gain immediate material benefit; she will promptly set a price on each of her “favors.” Or, she may be calculating enough, to make good use of this “foolish passion” of men, while deciding to think of the future also; she wants maintenance and good security for life; so she turns into a scheming coquette, and catches a rich husband. Or, again, she simply submits because she can see no way out and becomes a sour old maid, who curses this “wicked world.” With a still different temperament, she may be filled with an immense pity for all unhappy sinners, and so resigns wealth and pleasure, chooses “charity” as her work in life, and tries to make resignation easier for others. Or, once more, she becomes infatuated with the “new idea;” she feels that the “spiritual influence of pure women must elevate

these vicious men;" she is transformed into a "Reformer" filled with new delusions.

Although such cases as this are not at all rare, yet they may be called exceptions, for the reason that almost all the literature which treats of love and which is accessible to our moral young girl, is so written as not to furnish any intelligible comment, and also because, in spite of the "new woman," circumstances are still quite favorable for keeping girls blindfolded in this respect.

Hence the majority of girls are allowed to enjoy their illusions for quite a while. Of course occasional glimpses behind the scenes cannot be prevented; the newspapers, "town talk" and court proceedings will now and then give our young girl illustrations of the power of the sexual passion, but if it does not happen too often, her confidence will not be shaken and she will keep on hoping and longing for that good and beautiful, that ideal man, who can be an ardent lover without soiling himself with such "nasty" thoughts! The most fortunate circumstance which can be imagined is that in due time, while she is yet in the full vigor of youth and health, she will find and win her "mate," where that "inexplicable something" is present on both sides, and is combined with mutual esteem, harmony in ideas and sympathies, and unity of interests. Later on I will have occasion to prove that even in such a case the present moral code is sure to be detrimental to their future happiness.

I believe that every reader will admit that

these fortunate cases are also *exceptions*. I really believe that most marriages are still brought about by the command or at least by the direct or indirect influence of parents and guardians. Where marriage is entered into through “free choice” on both sides we may find in some cases the necessary condition for a mutually beneficial association of interests, but no sexual affinity, so that the woman is in great danger of having her happiness wrecked by the necessary result: disgusting and revolting sexual intercourse; or it may be a regular “love-match,” a strong sexual affinity, but with such antagonistic mental aptitudes and material interests that harmonious association is utterly impossible. In most cases, however, the girl has simply come to the conclusion that she must give up her ideals and illusions, that “Nature” or “God” has ordained her for marriage, that she does not wish to be an old maid, that she wants her own home, her own family, and somebody to “maintain” and “protect” her and them—and so she promptly accepts the first respectable young man who proposes, if he does not happen to be altogether too repulsive to her. In order to make it slightly less prosaic, to give a little poetic flavor to the occasion, she will try her best to “fall in love” with her suitor as much as possible. I assert that the majority of the so-called happy marriages of to-day originate in this manner—they are entered into with fewer illusions and hence bring less of disappointment.

In general the sex-life of young women as com-

pared with that of young men shows us the following: Less self-abuse, less illicit sexual intercourse (that is, a less number of women than men “sinning” in that manner) and—as a self-evident result—more real continence. As the abstinent-life is the only life which is consistent with present moral beliefs, it does not endanger self-respect and honesty and truthfulness of character, but the study of the laws of nature cannot leave any doubt in our minds that it must bring many other dangers to health of body and mind. If the tendency to the development of the sex-nature has been successfully checked, so that there is no sexual impulse, or if it is so weak that its suppression causes no trouble, then it will be found that the weakness of one part has resulted in or is accompanied by weakness of other important parts; that it has checked with equal success the formation of many characteristics of mind and body which are essential to the true beauty of womanhood. If, on the other hand, the perverse education has resulted in a premature or an unduly strong development of the sex-nature, or if this development has been normal, then the impulse will be strong and the forcible suppression of it must bring real disease. In that famous book, “The Elements of Social Science,” written by an English physician, which has had an immense circulation and has been translated into all modern languages, the author gives us a graphic description of the many disorders, ailments, and diseases of woman, caused by continence. He claims that

every good physician, who has the courage to tell the truth, will promptly admit that moderate sexual activity would be the best, yes, the only, remedy for many of the prevalent diseases of women.

It is not necessary, however, to study the "Elements" in order to learn this truth. Any intelligent person who is willing to see it *must* see it. I do not believe that any of my readers are "innocent" enough to presume that marriage results in "moderate sexual intercourse"—it generally means but the sudden change from enforced continence to enforced excess—nevertheless, many cases have been observed of women above twenty to whom marriage has brought a sudden remarkable increase of health and vigor.

Serious difficulties confront us everywhere in the education of girls, and I challenge our "moral" Freethinkers to point out a way which may be chosen without bringing great danger to the health and happiness of the young woman. If a strict and stern moral education is somewhat successful we will weaken or destroy an impulse which is essential to a beautiful development of the woman, and we will rob her of a great part of her chances to marry a congenial man. We must dread that, sooner or later, a sudden knowledge of the truth will cause her to despise the world and drive her into one of the dreary ways already described. If we allow her to revel in all kinds of erotic poetry, novels, and love-stories, visionary, erroneous ideas of the relations of men and women

will be the result, which will make it impossible for her to judge men correctly, and is very liable to leave her the easy victim of the arch-hypocrite or force her into embittered old-maidenship through the fading of foolish and unrealizable illusions. If we prohibit all such literature and try to keep her thoughts centered at all times on prosaic reality, we will rob her of that charm and bliss of youth, the faithful hope of future love and happiness, and she may turn out to be but a cold-hearted money-seeking machine.

But suppose we should not follow the example of the majority; suppose we should not exert ourselves to cover all sexual things with mud and filth in order to keep "sweet innocence" from touching them until the redeeming angel makes his appearance, in the person of the welcome suitor; suppose we should let her education and training be somewhat freer and more natural—or that we should be simply perfectly silent on the subject—or that we should be honest and truthful with the child from earliest youth. Then we may expect a natural and normal development of the sexual organism, which in due time will create a strong sexual impulse. This may result under favorable circumstances in an early marriage through a passionate "love-match," but, alas, almost all such love-matches end in misery, for the simple reason that sensual passion is not by any means the best basis for a good mating in the present marriage institution, which demands many important factors besides sexual intercourse. If

no early marriage takes place, then the enforced continence or unnatural satisfaction of the desire is sure to cause disease and misery—or the powerful impulse finds in some “weak moments” its most natural gratification, that is, with a congenial man, without having made “maintenance for life” the condition, without having received the “blessing” of a priest or of the State. Well, in this latter case good neighbors and friends will promptly see to it that there be but little happiness left in the life of the “fallen woman!”

What shall we do? Which course shall we take? The author of “Social Science” calls it a sad dilemma, an awful labyrinth, and from his point of view these dreary terms may be somewhat excusable and even justifiable; for a true Freethinker, however, the way should be clear:

Liberate yourselves from the false morality of the priests, which hinders you on all sides in the pursuit of true happiness! Liberate yourselves from the tyrannical laws which oppress you everywhere! Then—and not until then—will you be able to reach your ideal in education: “*Mens sana in corpore sano!*” Then—and not until then—will your children have a chance to grow into true manhood and womanhood, each with a “sound mind in a sound body,” capable of enjoying this life to its full extent and of giving lasting happiness to others!

In the following pages it will be my aim to test each and every reason which might possibly make such a course appear fatal or dangerous—

and I hope and trust that I shall be able to dispel from all logical minds those doubts and fears which have heretofore caused them to be antagonistic to, or to hesitate in the agitation for *Freedom in Love!*



VII.

Love.

FREE LOVE! How could any noble mind ever come to hate these beautiful words! Was there ever a bard who sang in praise of enforced love? Is there in all the poetry of the world a single beautiful idyl of love which does not tell of *free* love? And yet, alas, what a strange reception the world has given to the theory bearing this name!

A great poet sings of the beauty of love and boldly declares that this sweet and powerful feeling is altogether too noble and vital to be subject to the tyrannical compulsion of priest and legislator. He finds many enthusiastic admirers in the crowd, who rave about his glowing strophes, but when it comes to acting in the spirit of his affirmations, they promptly draw away trembling for the "sacredness" of their marriage-institution. Instead of practically accepting freedom they prefer to make "exceptional laws" for great poets and artists!

Through sad experiences in wedlock or the study of the many unhappy marriages everywhere observable, a man or woman has come to the con-

clusion that an institution which is the cause of so much dreadful misery should be abolished; because he is opposed to marriage he calls himself and is called a free-lover—and every person who yet feels somewhat comfortable at his own fire-side promptly condemns the “destroyer of home and family!”

Another argues thus: The satisfaction of the sexual impulse is a pleasure tyrannically denied to many at present. Give to every one a chance to enjoy this pleasure and it will be equivalent to an increase of the total of human happiness—and then “civilized society,” in which a truly beautiful enjoyment of this association is a very rare exception, failing to appreciate the value of this argument, fights as before for its marriage institution, which it must believe to be endangered.

Quite a number of men and women have come to the conclusion that the greatest possible freedom of the individual, not alone in love but in all other affairs, is not only the best but the only means for the eradication of existing evils—but these are *Anarchists!* and that word alone is still sufficient to cause such a confusion in the brains of the majority of the people, to produce such vague but horrible images of blood, dynamite, and torch in their thoughts, that sound reasoning is utterly impossible in their controversies with these “extremists.”

And so it comes to pass that, in spite of their many irrefutable arguments, the Free-Lovers can boast of but little success, and those beautiful

words, "Free Love," have been brought into almost general disrepute.

In order to understand what these words imply it is necessary, first of all, to answer the question: What is love? Our eminent poets and authors give us the following answers: One of them declares that "true love" means "the spiritual longing for an harmonious chord to your own scale of feelings and sensations;" for another it is "the passionate appreciation of the truly good and the truly beautiful in man or woman;" a third thinks mainly of harmonious mental co-operation; for the fourth it is simply "an inexplicable something, which must be felt but cannot be described;" a fifth will admit that only that affection is worthy to be called love which includes all of the foregoing, and Mantegazza tells us that love is neither more nor less than "the power which brings about the union of the ovum with the semen!"

Here we have quite a variety of explanations from which to select. No wonder therefore that people have not yet come to an agreement as to what should constitute the ideal love, which would properly fit into their ideal marriage. No wonder that there are so many different kinds of "Free-Lovers."

Several years ago I read a curious little German book entitled, "Psychology of Love," which advocates as a distinct theory for agitation an idea which seems to be in the minds of a great number of our American reformers in a rather

vague and indefinite form. The author, M. K. Ferdinand, deplores the fact that human beings manifest so much sensual or sexual love which is not combined with spiritual love. The only way which he can see for bettering the condition of human society, is to educate the race up to such a standard that "harmony of souls" alone will be able to cause sensual affection, so that no sexual impulse will be apparent in any man or woman until he or she has found a being "who is able to dissolve the discords of his soul into beautiful harmony." Of course he promptly admits that "many a generation will pass away" before this goal can be reached.

It seems very strange that an intelligent man can believe that such a state of affairs could ever be attained; still it might be hard to prove that it would be eternally impossible. His theory becomes simply ludicrous, however, when you perceive that, although he plainly sees the dreary prospects, the sad disappointments, the hopeless misery, which it would bring to the present and following generations, yet he deems it unnecessary to test the value of this ideal love and ideal marriage for which we are asked to make such tremendous sacrifices.

Well, as he is a Christian he may be excused, but I can see no reason whatever why we Free-thinkers should torture our hearts with the ungrateful task of trying to force ourselves and our progeny to accept an ideal which was born in the brains of tyrannical and nature-hating priests.

As we have no other aim in life than to gain the greatest possible happiness on earth, we simply have to investigate what desires the different kinds of love will cause and then try to find a way in which all of these desires or as many as possible of them can be satisfied without lessening the happiness of any human being.

With this object in view we will now define love and its desires:

Every normal and healthy human being after reaching maturity feels a longing desire for sexual intercourse. Each needs as associate a person of the opposite sex, and at first (in the case of a man) his "affectionate inclination" is towards woman in general; any sexually sound person of that sex could fully satisfy his physical desire. But, in looking around for a partner, he promptly finds that many persons are so unsympathetic to him that the pleasure of intercourse with them would be vastly less than with others more complementary to his nature. Finally he perceives that one particular person has such a charm for him that he decidedly prefers this one being to all others for the satisfaction of his natural impulse. We call this natural affinity or—sexual love. As it means the preference for a physical or sensual pleasure it is also called physical or sensual love.

We know that this love may often be entirely independent of any "soul-harmony;" that it may suddenly grow into an ardent passion without the least knowledge of the mind and character of the chosen one; that for the young men and women of

to-day it is that "inexplicable something" which draws them together with irresistible force in spite of unsympathetic spiritual qualities and the contra-argumentation of reason.

"I ask not, I care not
If guilt's in thy heart;
I know that I love thee,
Whatever thou art!"

Any fervent attachment of one human being to another, which is deemed worthy to be called love, and which is not due to the desire for sexual intercourse, is generally termed spiritual love to distinguish it from the former. This may seem incorrect, as such love may also be but the result of the appreciation of physical qualities, but perhaps it may be justified by the following considerations: It is generally acknowledged, and I see no reason to doubt, that sexual love is due to a great extent to "instinctive feeling" (that is, it is not caused by intellectual weighing of qualities), while all other love may be traced to some reasoning of the mind or impulsion of the æsthetic nature: As it will not prevent a clear understanding and may even facilitate it, we will be satisfied for the present with this distinction. Hence we find that mental or spiritual love may originate in either of the following ways:

1. Reflections such as these: How good, how beautiful, noble, courageous, refined, wise, or powerful he or she is!—These real or imagined qualities may cause such an ardent admiration and appreciation of one person by another that the well-

being of the former is necessary to the happiness of the latter. The greatest joy of the lover consists in giving joy to the beloved. This so-called unselfish love may also be caused by long and intimate co-operation and association of interests (as in the family), or by the continuously potent influence which one human being has on the development of another (as in the relation of the parents to the child, of the guardians to the ward, of the foster-parents to the adopted child), or by the feeling of gratitude (as of the child for the parent).

2. The human being feels that for a happy life he absolutely needs to co-operate and co-enjoy with others, be it in music, song and dance, in walks and talks, in games and sport, in reveling in poesy and literature, in the study of art and science—or in sexual intercourse. He discovers that in any one of these labors or recreations the co-operation of some persons is far more agreeable to him than that of others and in any one of them he may prefer one individual to all others. If this refers to pleasure or work which is exceptionally important to him, or if he prefers the same person for several of these enjoyments, a passionate love may be the result.

It may be in order to remark here that those “grand moments” in our lives, when the highest exaltation of joy or the terrible depression of grief, when bright hopes or imminent dangers, or the spontaneous enthusiasm for a great cause, stir the souls of two human beings simultaneously with

mighty force and passion, are very likely to bring those two very near to each other and to give to each of them a priceless value in the eyes of the other as a partner in future co-operations and co-enjoyments.

3. In naming in the foregoing a few examples of objects of co-operation, I left out some of the most important, that is all those in which the object in view is not so much the direct enjoyment of the co-operation in itself, as a mutually beneficial joining of forces in the acquisition of the *means* for enjoyment (commercial and industrial associations, professional unions, joint households with mutually advantageous division of the necessary labor, etc.) It may appear a little queer to some readers to designate as "spiritual love" an affection which is simply the result of the appreciated usefulness of another person in co-operation in the acquisition and utilization of material things, but it cannot be denied that such appreciation has often caused even passionate attachment. As we cannot possibly call it sexual we shall have to let it stand under the title of "spiritual love."

Our observations show that the desires of love are manifold and varied, but it may be truthfully stated that they all refer to some kind of co-enjoyment or co-operation, and that the object in view is not so much to find an "image of self" as to gain the best possible counterpart. Therefore it follows that, as woman is the best counterpart of man—not only in sexual intercourse, but in almost all enjoyments and labors, "spiritual" love is more

frequent between men and women than between persons of the same sex.

Wherever spiritual love exists between a man and a woman who are both sexually healthy it is very liable to cause also a mutual preference for sexual intercourse, or, in other words, sexual love. This is due to the fact that the pleasure of the sex-act does not consist in physical lust only, but also in the sympathetic pleasure of giving joy to another. It is self-evident, therefore, that the pleasure must be greatly enhanced by spiritual love for the participant, as that adds so much to the intensity of that essential part of the delight, the happiness of giving happiness to others.

On the other hand, it may be asserted that sexual passion causes all the qualities of the beloved to appear in such an embellishing radiance that a kind of spiritual love may result therefrom. If, confiding in this, intimate association of interests shall follow (as in the case of modern marriage) then the situation will become decidedly dangerous; full satisfaction will promptly extinguish the embellishing light, coolly and critically practical reason will investigate, and the resulting disappointment will terminate in the opposite of spiritual love. If, however, the full satisfaction of the sexual passion brings no servitude, no duty, no responsibility to either, then the memory of that "grand moment, in which the highest exaltation of joy made two hearts beat in perfect unison," may develop a lasting spiritual affection

between the two in spite of a thousand unsympathetic qualities, which may exist, but with which the lovers are not asked to contend.

VIII.

The Value of Marriage and the Free Love Movement.

AFTER having investigated the different causes and desires of love, let us ask the following questions: In what do the beauty and the happiness of our present so-called happy marriages consist? Why is it so valuable? What is there about it that we wish to retain and for which we need compulsion? Is it the beautiful sensual love? Is it the beautiful sexual relation?

In spite of the unfavorable circumstances, there are yet many pleasant pictures of beautiful family-life to be seen, and I beg you to ask yourself the question, What it is that you admire in them. Many a poet and novelist has described to us a cozy home-circle, where is found harmonious co-operation, where husband and wife faithfully share each others' woes and joys, are united in love for their children, and join their efforts in rearing and educating them.—Suppose, however, that our poet or author should wish to picture for us a pretty idyl of sensual love, a beautiful sexual association—would he ever dream of selecting that faith-

ful married couple as his hero and heroine? No!—If he does not choose “sweet innocence,”—if he dare not glorify “secret sin,”—if the hero and heroine must be the duly registered father and mother of a child or of children—then you may rest assured that the happy denouement will have to be preceded by some little adultery or at least an adulterous thought, by a long separation, a serious jealousy, or—in short—by some “extraordinary” incident which will give to the kisses and embraces a little of that necessary flavor, free choice!

It is certainly not sexual love, which makes that marriage appear beautiful to us. Their sexual pleasure is deprived of the blissful charm of wooing and winning, for it has become “marital duty!” It is void of the cheerful pride in being the chosen one, for they have no more choice! And finally, is it not human nature to value that but little which we can have for the simple asking, and to value even less what is forced upon us?

What is it, then, that gives value to this marriage? It is the true comradeship, the association of interest, the intimate friendship—the “spiritual” love!

In Karl Heinzen’s treatise on “The Rights of Women, or the Sexual Relations,” you will find the following sentences: “The so-called nuptial bed is the grave of false, but the ark of covenant of true love.” “Of course I hold that love in marriage changes from a state of passionate attachment into a condition of quiet friendship.”

If these sentences mean anything they must mean this: 1. The nuptial bed is the grave of sexual love (which K. H. calls "false"), but under favorable circumstances the intimate association of interests may strengthen and increase spiritual love.

2. In marriage passionate love changes into quiet friendship. (That is if the necessary conditions for such friendship are present.)

Every close observer will have to admit the truth of these statements. If thereupon Karl Heinzen had advised our young men and women to be very careful in the selection of the life-companion, to investigate seriously and deliberately all of the qualities of the chosen one before entering into marriage, and had urged them not to let that "blind" passion be the guide, which will be gone after the wedding-night or at least after the honey-moon, then we would have to call it good, practical advice. But Karl Heinzen was not so practical; he was an enthusiastic admirer of ideal love, of passionate love, and he deeply deplored that the sad words of Schiller are yet so true:

"With that sweetest holiday
Must the May of life depart;
With the cestus loosed—away
Flies illusion from the heart."

And so he further says: "Lovers must come to be to each other that which men have hitherto placed above the clouds by the words "god" and "goddess;" yes, they must become even more to each other, namely, the realized ideal of their

moral conceptions and of their sense of beauty. If they learn to seek and to appreciate each other in this sense, love will become a *lasting* enthusiasm!"

What a queer inconsistency the confusion in the conception of the word love has caused here! Is this the "quiet friendship" which must be the result of marriage? Did the author not know that in nine cases out of ten this exaltation in the feelings, which places the beloved "above the clouds," is the sure sign of strong sensual or sexual love, in other words, of that love which is killed in the nuptial bed? The following is his plan for bettering conditions: All young men and women shall marry very soon after maturity; all marriages shall be strictly monogamous, but there shall be absolutely free choice in entering into and dissolving them; any marriage shall be promptly annulled by an unfaithful desire of either party, for he says: "An adulterous thought is the sign that the love has changed to another; marriage without love is no longer marriage, hence so-called adultery can be nothing more than the actual proof that marriage no longer exists." Therefore, when the first adulterous thought comes to the young couple, they shall promptly part and each of them enter into a new marriage. "Their experience may serve as a guide which will enable them to find their ideal all the surer in another relationship!" And so they will change until they have reached that ideal state in which husband and wife will appear to each other as "god"

and “goddess!” As the author is well aware that in some cases this may necessitate a good many “changes,” the state must of course take care of the children.

This is K. Heinzen’s theory. Many other free-lovers are not such enthusiastic dreamers and have come to the conclusion that it will not do to raise the ideal “above the clouds;” some have advised the discarding of the word “marriage” altogether; others have lost faith in the state as a guardian for their children but—excepting these differences—whether these social radicals be English, German, French or American, the essence and substance of their theory is the same, viz: Love alone can sanctify a union between a man and a woman; enforced love is no love at all, it means prostitution or rape! And what does the opponent answer? “If all men and women considered themselves perfectly free in love, and if the first adulterous thought should then promptly sever the union between a man and woman, in a very short time all family relations would be broken up. That will not do. We need constancy, faithfulness and the sense of duty, to protect our homes, to secure for our children the loving care of a father and a mother.”

It takes a great deal of vulgarity not to agree with the arguments of the free-lover—and it takes a great deal of “idealism” to contradict the statement of his opponent. Therefore, it seems to many a sad dilemma in which we must choose between two evils. But that is not the case. Please notice

this: When the free-lover condemns marriage he thinks of the enforced sexual relation; when his opponent defends the institution he thinks of the association of interest, of the comradeship, the mutual aid and sympathy, the joint interest in the children, and the like. Both of them are so thoroughly hypnotized by a foolish love-ideal that they seem to be perfectly unconscious of the fact that they are speaking of two entirely different things, which need not be dependent upon each other. Let us consider them separately, and we will soon reach a favorable conclusion:

1. The enjoyment of sexual intercourse is essential to the normal and healthy life of human beings. Moral and legal laws deprive many of this pleasure, force others to unnatural, unhealthy, and perverse satisfaction, or to injurious excess—in short, cause misery all around.

Therefore, let us have perfect liberty in sexual relations!

2. The ethical value and the beauty of sexual love consists in the necessity of wooing and winning. The only truly beautiful sexual intercourse is that which is brought about by mutual spontaneous *sexual* love. The fact or the belief that it is the result of a contract, a pre-arrangement, that it is a duty, or that it is simply the unavoidable tribute of a "relation," is sure to rob it of the greatest part of its charm and beauty.

Therefore, let us make no sexual contracts whatever, neither for life nor for a week; let us denounce such contracts as immoral and dangerous; let

there be neither monogamy, polygamy nor polyandry—in brief, no sexual “living together,” no sexual “relation” of any kind!

3. We find that there is yet another love between man and woman which is entirely independent of sexual preference. The enjoyment of spiritual love may not be essential to healthy physical life, but it certainly is absolutely necessary for the true happiness of every man and woman. Should we not ask for the same absolute liberty in this love?

No, for we have it already! We are not only free to love spiritually, but such loving has been preached to humanity for many hundred years as a sacred duty. If a person can furnish the absolute proof that his or her love is “purely spiritual” and will remain “pure,” it may be bestowed freely upon any one or a dozen persons and no censure or persecution will follow; even the worst Xanthippe or the most jealously disposed husband will not cause a “scene” on that account. But in the case of a man and a woman such proof is almost always absolutely impossible to present, and so the tyrannical restraint of sexual love has limited or killed all other kinds of love as well; yes, alas! it has had the effect of making the effort to follow the advice of the Nazarene, “Love thy neighbor as thyself,” always a miserable farce!

Give us freedom in sexual love and we will have freedom in all love!

4. We find that man needs for his greatest possible happiness the association and co-opera-

tion of woman in many different fields (and *vice versa*), but that the differences in circumstances and above all the differences in individual qualities and propensities make it utterly impossible that any general rule should ever apply equitably and beneficially to all.

Therefore, let us give to every individual perfect freedom to choose and enter into such association and co-operation with woman or man as he or she deems advisable; let us denounce as immoral and disastrous that foolish custom which demands everything or nothing!

5. We further find, however, that for many of these associations and co-operations, a certain security, mutual confidence in the stability of the union and mutual trust in the constancy and faithfulness of the partner, are absolutely necessary to render them as useful as they can and should be made.

Therefore, let us have such binding agreements for mutual aid, such economical or business contracts between a man and a woman as may appear mutually beneficial. Let us understand that we expect every man and every woman to be faithful and true in these partnerships, the same as we expect it of every honorable person to-day in any business agreement. Let us understand that Free Love shall not mean that the "spontaneous desire of the moment" is to be considered a sufficient reason for breaking up a household, for forsaking a family, or for betraying the trust of a friend and comrade!

Free yourselves from superstition and then treat each one of the diverse co-operations separately. Plain common sense will then tell you where a short-time contract would be in order, where the union would require a longer duration to be of any value—and where any kind of a contract or agreement would be worse than useless. Act accordingly and you will be able to gain and secure real Freedom in Love, while the theory which has heretofore been presented to the public as Free Love means neither more nor less than Free Marriage.



IX.

The Happy Marriage of To-day.

I WILL now keep my promise and prove by an example that the present system must destroy a great part of the happiness of the married couple even under the most favorable circumstances which can be imagined.

A young and healthy woman, pure and moral according to the present standard, finds her "true mate." The "inexplicable something" draws them together with irresistible power and—as luck would have it—it is combined with such qualities of body and mind (and purse I probably ought to add) on both sides that the necessary association of interests in marriage appear highly agreeable to both. The young man goes a-wooing; after some hesitation he calls up his courage, pops the question, and is made the happiest of mortals by that little word which means so much in such a case. This is a time of true happiness; yes, almost every poetic mind will promptly admit that it is the most beautiful period of life. (What a strong argument for free love this is!)

As our young people are strictly moral their future sexual relations are of course not alluded to in their talks. All their plans for the future refer to their intellectual aspirations and comradeship, their practical co-operation, the home, the household, the wedding-trip and the like. Hence it is but natural that only these matters are considered in fixing the date for the marriage. I believe in most cases parents, aunties, brothers, and sisters have even more to say in this matter than the lovers themselves.

A day or two before the wedding most mothers begin to get nervous and to become conscious of the feeling that they ought to give a few explanations to "sweet innocence." It seems to them an awful task to speak to their daughters of "such things," but it appears absolutely necessary to soften somewhat the abrupt transition from vague illusions to "vulgar reality," and so this mother finally plucks up courage to tell her darling what the beloved man will expect from her. Noticing trouble, fright, and consternation in the countenance of the young woman, she may add reassuringly that "it will not seem so bad after a little while."

Where is there a woman in the present "moral" society—be she ever so rational otherwise—who can speak to her daughter on such an occasion a few appreciative and cheerful words on the beauty and charm of sensual love and sexual intercourse? You will hardly find a single one—and yet such an

utterance would be of great importance, it would prevent many a tragedy.

Many a beautiful love has been killed on the wedding night simply because the young husband was too excited or otherwise unable to give an eloquent explanation of the strange fact that actions which heretofore appeared to the young woman as the meanest and nastiest had suddenly become innocent, good and noble, yes, even a "sacred duty"—and therefore scared the young bride with his ardent and impetuous advances, which fill her with loathing and disgust.

But, excuse me, we wanted to consider only the most favorable circumstances. We will suppose therefore that our young hero has given this explanation in due time and in most felicitous phrases. (I can assure you that it is not a very easy task!) Now, if we can add that our young couple happen to be well matched in regard to sexual needs and inclinations and that they have made no mistake in their judgment of their individual qualities, then we have the ideal married couple of to-day.

Our nonsensical marriage customs generally have the effect that the first "tribute of love" is demanded from the young woman at the most unfavorable moment, but, nevertheless, if she is sexually healthy the normal satisfaction of the strong natural impulse may have a beneficent influence, and increased physical and mental health may be the immediate result. The young husband, being able to have regular sexual intercourse

sanctioned by society, will also perceive an immense relief in the consequent freedom from the trouble and anxiety which his secret craving has heretofore caused him.

How will this regular sexual intimacy affect their happiness? Well, under such favorable circumstances it certainly may for some time appear to them the highest bliss. What a transforming light the pleasant memory of those beautiful nights will throw upon the prosaic doings of the day! How cheerfully they will attend to their respective routine duties, knowing that a delicious enjoyment will follow! How beautifully everything is arranged for these enjoyments! How easily these intimate unions are attained now, which formerly were utterly impossible! But *one* bed for both!—with enthusiastic anticipation every ardent youth will think of that!—and yet, what a depraving compulsion where it becomes the *custom*!

But to our young couple it yet appears the best possible arrangement. What a charming and delicious task it seems to the man to conquer the reluctance and timidity of his young wife, who gradually allows him more and more “liberties!” The “sense of shame,” and the “moral feeling,” the result of a narrow and severe moral education, will not yield at once; even the most ardent and eloquent words of love can not subdue these feelings in the first hour; for quite a while it may be necessary to woo and fight for many little privileges! Ah, beautiful honey-moon, for thee we all prefer “sweet innocence” to the “knowing woman!”

Many grand words have been said and written in praise of the charm and beauty of "innocence" in young women. Yet all these poetical glorifications cannot change the fact that this "innocence" means neither more nor less than *stupidity*, a lack of knowledge of self combined with shame of self. To those who still regard the sexual impulse as the devil himself, all this may appear perfectly consistent with their theory, but there are many intelligent men who long ago discarded this absurd contempt for sexuality, who still assert that this "innocence" adds a peculiar charm to the woman of sixteen to twenty, and to whom the idea of "sweet sixteen" knowing all about sexual matters would be almost revolting. How queer that these men, who prize education and intelligence in all other fields, for women as well as for men, should have such a weakness for stupidity in women in this one respect! But there is a valid and sufficient reason for this also. This so-called innocence lengthens and embellishes the honey-moon! As I have stated before, the value of sexual intercourse for intelligent human beings consists not merely in the physical pleasure; probably the greater part of its charm and beauty is found in the hopeful wooing and the pride in winning, and this of course is possible only where there is the right of resistance. But the present moral code and a foolish love-ideal have so perverted reason that the "moral man" of to-day positively denies this right of resistance to every "knowing" woman after she has chosen *once*, for he will either despise her as a courtesan, or, if

she has once declared her love for a certain man, expects permanent submission to that man. Only to the “pure” and ignorant young woman he must accord a certain right of reluctance and resistance even after he possesses her through love or legal bondage, which means, in other words, that a little wooing is still necessary even after she has become “his own.” In a free society, where no moral nor legal law, no former declaration of love, would entitle a man to expect submission as a matter of course, where he would have to woo and win as often as he wished to enjoy, ignorance (now falsely termed innocence) would have no charm, not even in sweet sixteen.

Many a smart young wife instinctively feels the force of this conception and will try to play the part of the “innocent” woman a little longer; she will show a sense of shame, a shy and timid reluctance, even after she has overcome these feelings inwardly, in order to enjoy again and again the charming pleasure of yielding to ardent wooing. Very soon, however, the young husband will have but an ironical smile for such coquetry. No, this innocence cannot be retained very long in the close and intimate “living together” of present marriage; soon the least sexual excitement will cause indulgence without any particular prelude; no further wooing is necessary, for it has become “marital duty” or, what is about as bad, the matter-of-course tribute of love!

As the cozy nuptial-chamber of our young couple is the one place in which they feel secure

from intrusion, it soon appears as the fittest place for talking seriously about all their associated interests, and also of course for settling their little differences and disputes. Hence it will often happen that, while preparing for the night's rest, they will converse upon the most prosaic subjects. (A few months ago our young hero would have thought it impossible that he could ever look on so coldly and indifferently while his pretty bride was undressing, but—"there's nothing like getting used to a thing!") After they are comfortably settled in bed, not being over-tired, they will resume their talk about the political prospects, the chances for promotion, the dullness of business, the trouble with the hired girl, the havoc which cats and mice have caused in the pantry and wardrobe, and so on—until—well, until one of them notices an agreeable titillation on account of the close proximity of the nude bodies—and—fifteen minutes later they have done their duty and are sound asleep!

This is sexual love in marriage—not in the unhappy marriage—not in your troublesome unions, where there is a serious fight every little while (in these the reconciliations may often add no small extra charm to the connubial embrace)—but in your quiet and harmless marriage with its model of constancy and faithfulness, of true comradeship, in short, in the ideal marriage of to-day. No wonder, therefore, that a vague feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction will soon come over the young wife, that, in spite of the good circumstances, the pretty

home and the model husband, life will often appear very dull and prosaic to her. In vain she will ask herself the question why it is that their relations appear so cool and indifferent now compared with the honey-moon, why all those playful fondlings have ceased, why the kisses and caresses have lost so much of their charm. She feels that it is not due to real indifference, that each of them takes as fervent an interest in the weal and woe of the other as ever before, but she finds no answer except that they have grown older and wiser, and with a sad smile of resignation she will look back upon the foolish, but ah, so beautiful “illusions of youth!”

Observe our young couple after a few years have passed. What has become of their love-relation? The love has changed — “from a state of passionate attachment to a condition of quiet friendship.”

I certainly do not wish to speak lightly of this quiet friendship. The true comradeship which grows more firm and loyal with each year of intimate living together, which, in fact, becomes indissoluble through that most beautiful and most binding association of interests, the joint rearing and educating of children, is indeed of great value, but in spite of this friendship, in spite of the most favorable material circumstances, life may become very dull and dreary, and husband and wife may grow very prosaic, indolent, and indifferent because a foolish compulsion has deprived them of that sweetest charm of love, which consists in the

constant seeking and finding, soliciting and yielding, wooing and winning for the enjoyments of love.

The quiet friendship which exists between the husband and wife gives to both a safe and sound foundation for a happy life, but they have spoilt it all by adding to their economic contract and their comradeship contract (promise of mutual aid and assistance) a love contract and a sexual contract. This must degrade their sexual intercourse and rob it of all its beauty and dignity. As women are generally far more punctilious than men in keeping this contract, the harmful influence of such pernicious agreements is even more apparent in them than in men. As sexual intercourse with the husband has become a custom and a "duty," it must be expected as a natural result that almost any other somewhat sympathetic man will have more attraction for our young wife (sexually) than her husband, but here your moral law promptly steps in and positively forbids any sexual thought of another man; yes, this law goes even farther: As it is impossible to draw a definite boundary-line between the sensual and the spiritual, it virtually prohibits any free social intercourse with other men. Every male guest whom the husband brings into the house, every gentleman who must be courteous to her in society, respects in this virtuous young wife the sacred property of another man, and rigidly guards himself against any warmer feeling towards her; his conversation with her hardly ever goes beyond a few meaning-

less polite phrases, for any serious and animated discourse would be too conspicuous, and probably dangerous; for the latter he prefers the society of men, or of "women of loose morals." The free social intercourse of our young wife with the outside world, therefore, is restricted to the society of those of her sex, who, being equally virtuous, are equally enslaved. No wonder, then, if she becomes dull and narrow-minded and is greedy for scandalous "town-talk" and gossip or any other similar sensation, which may bring a little welcome excitement into the monotony of her life.

The study of the so-called happy marriages of to-day must convince us that: 1. The intimate association of interests has the tendency to create a true comradeship and friendship, and wherever the latter has existed beforehand to intensify and strengthen the same. 2. That, even under the most favorable circumstances which can be imagined, the sad words of the poet heretofore quoted will forever be true of marriage: "With the cestus loosed—away flies illusion from the heart!" This will remain true so long as men and women are foolish enough to try to retain love by a love contract or to secure sexual happiness by a sexual contract.

On the other hand the study of unhappy marriages will show us that in most cases the unhappiness is caused directly either by the enforcement or by the breach of the sexual or love contract. Where this is not the reason we will find that the misery is due to the fact that a man and a woman entered

into associations (to which they were not adapted and for which they had no inclination) simply because, enslaved by custom or a foolish love-ideal, they considered them inseparable from the desired union.

From these observations a logical thinker who is free from superstition can draw no other conclusion than that men and women should consider each association separately and enter into such only as appear mutually useful and, above all, that they should under no circumstances degrade their love relation by a love contract nor debase their sexual intercourse by a sexual contract.

X.

How long will Love Relations last in a Free Society?

MANY a reader will probably ask this question with some anxiety. As love is a feeling, not an action, I promptly answer: For life, wherever fervent love receives the adequate response. In a free society all those factors disappear which now kill love, and furthermore nobody would there consider it necessary to suppress love for one being in order to be able to love another. The result would be that wherever love was fully reciprocated and hence led to a beautiful co-enjoyment, the man and woman would never afterwards be indifferent to each other, although there might be remarkable changes in the degree of fervor and intimacy of their attachment.

But I suppose in most cases the above question would not refer to the constancy in the feeling but to the duration of the co-operations resulting from love. This requires a more lengthy answer, and for that purpose I must mention a few examples of such co-operation:

1. Music, song and dance, games and sports, walks and talks, and other recreations ;

2. Mental co-operation in art, science, and literature ;

3. Practical business co-operation ;

4. The above combined with mutual utilization of the income, as in the joint household ;

5. General association of interests resulting from intimate friendship ; comradeship contract ;

6. The family.

Notice the great difference in these associations in regard to the necessary and presumable duration, and the facility of dissolution. For the actions mentioned under One there is no danger in following the spontaneous desire of the moment ; the object desired is achieved very quickly, and common sense teaches us to leave the repetition to the *new* desire ; the value and beauty of the association could never be increased, and would always be diminished, by a binding contract. A mutually beneficent mental co-operation in serious studies may require more constancy and stability and the importance of a longer duration of the union and the difficulty of dissolution increase with every number on my list ; yes, it may truthfully be said that the last-named, the family-relation, that is, the joint interest in the rearing and educating of children, is in fact almost indissoluble. In a free society every man and woman will duly consider these points in entering into any association. How will they consider that one important co-operation of man and woman, sexual inter-

course? It certainly does not require a long time, and the dissolution or separation after each co-operation of this kind is an absolute necessity! Can there be any question about it, that common sense should teach us to leave the repetition to the *new* desire? Can there be any further doubt in our minds that a binding contract for sexual service would decrease the value and beauty of future associations? I think not, and I hope that I have shown sufficient reasons by this time why a free man would never agree to such a contract, although he might willingly bind his freedom by some other contracts which are included in the present marriage-relation. A joint household for a day, a comradeship or friendship for a week, would have but little value, and a family-relation lasting a month only would be a mere farce—yet but a few hours will suffice to make a beautiful sexual co-operation, a complete, perfectly satisfying entirety.

If a free man and a free woman resolve to establish a common home, a joint household, they will understand that this is no love contract (although love may have created the desire), but an economic co-operation requiring an economic contract. They will know that, in order to make such an association valuable, a certain security, that is, confidence in the faithfulness of the partner, is necessary; that, therefore, the “spontaneous desire of the moment” of either partner should not be considered sufficient reason for terminating the contract. Yet this is one of those associations which, like other

business agreements, may be made for a month, a year, or for indefinite time, and which generally can be easily dissolved and settled after due notice has been given by either party.

If intimate friendship exists between a free man and a free woman they may consider it mutually advantageous to promise each other aid and assistance in sickness, poverty and other distress (which I call a comradeship contract). This will of course be meant for life and will be considered absolutely binding by every honorable man or woman; yet great changes in circumstance may sometimes necessitate a release from these obligations, but it will be understood that no person in the world can give this release except the partner. Not even the most passionate attachment to another person would be considered justification for a breach of such a contract.

If a free man and a free woman resolve to establish a family, that is, if they wish to accept the relation of father and mother to a child or several children, they will understand that this is an economic contract requiring an economic agreement, and that it means besides an association of mental and emotional interests, which neither legal or moral laws nor the decree of either or both partners can ever dissolve; which, in fact, only death can annul.

Where there is intimate friendship, perfect confidence in each other, and a high degree of mutual esteem, a free man and a free woman may have the desire to enter into all of the above-named asso-

ciations with each other and to add to it a general association of material interests (joint purse—communism). This will be for life of course and after a year or two of such a union the two will be bound together by so many ties that a separation would result in severe losses and a great forfeiture of happiness and contentment. We could hardly imagine a reason, however, why “free” persons should desire such a separation. These unions, with very rare exceptions, will last for life, and they will be free from any thought of a complete release from mutual obligations.

In such associations as those mentioned in the foregoing list free men and women may gladly and willingly bind their liberty in order to gain the greatest possible security for a happy and contented life, but they will never let any of these agreements interfere with their freedom of feeling nor with their freedom of action so far as the direct desires of love and its immediate enjoyments are concerned. They will walk and talk, kiss and caress, sing and dance, roam and play with whomsoever they please (presuming of course the willingness of the respective persons selected as partners for these pleasures), and they will never let any contract, agreement or “relation” interfere with their free and intimate social intercourse with their fellow-beings. They may deem it advisable to suppress the feeling of hate, but they will never see any reason to guard against any feeling of love. They will try to find something to love in every person with whom they associate and wherever a

warm attachment is felt it will be freely shown, appreciated, and enjoyed. Love may create the desire for such associations as those described in the foregoing, but it would be considered a meanness and a folly to make the agreement to such a contract the condition for allowing the direct enjoyment of love. Wherever the intimate social intercourse engenders in two human beings a strong sexual attraction for each other, resulting in the longing for the most intimate physical union, they will freely follow "the spontaneous desire of the moment" and enjoy together without any conditions, oaths, or promises, without dreading to interfere thereby with any rights or privileges and—what is still more important—without fearing to interfere with or destroy thereby any other love relation.

"Ah, this means promiscuous sex-relations!" some of my readers probably may exclaim at this point.

No, I did not say that! It simply means that the sex-life of each individual will be liberated from the control of society as well as from the control of any partner or mate. We might, of course, suppose the possibility that the same man would always choose the same woman for this pleasure and *vice versa*, so that, in spite of their constant freedom of choice, an exclusive sexual intercourse for life would be the result—but we must not forget, that such an exclusiveness would be possible only with a couple of exceptional harmony of body, mind and emotions, and even then would

require such a remarkable uniformity in their development and the subsequent physical and mental health, that the case would be worthy to be added to the seven wonders of the world. No, such exclusiveness is possible only through moral or legal laws or through the self-control and will power of the individual, who constantly guards himself against other love for the sake of a love contract or a valued "relation." We denounce the former as a depraving tyranny, and regard the latter as a disaster-breeding folly caused by superstition. Let us understand, therefore, that the legitimate result of perfect freedom in love will be variety in the sex-life of almost every human being!

Later on I will have occasion to prove that we have no reason whatever to deplore this, that it is, in fact, far more cheering than if we had to suppose that for each of us there were in this world but one true sexual mate, but one being who could be considered a beautiful complement to our sex-nature.

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A Varietist Free Lover, to whom the manuscript had been sent for criticism, protested quite energetically against the assertions in this chapter that certain associations of a man and a woman would of course be meant for life. He wrote as follows: "There is no "of course" about it! There is no contract that is not honorably dissolvable upon a settlement of accounts. And what is to hinder the making of such contracts for a limited term of years? Why should such contracts be

made for life only while all other contracts can be made for any number of years?"

My answer is this: The business part of any contract (referring to the co-operation in the acquisition and the utilization of material goods) can generally be dissolved in a mutually satisfactory manner by a "settlement of accounts." This holds good even for the associations for life mentioned in the foregoing, but it must always be remembered that the latter are far more than mere business contracts. There are sympathies and emotions existing between human beings which are greatly strengthened and reinforced by intimate economic co-operation, and which are likely to cause strong connecting links between the respective parties which you cannot "demonstrate away" by any theorizing, which will exist even in perfect freedom from legal and moral compulsion and which cannot be severed without causing severe wounds. Many "failures" of the Free Lovers are due directly to their strong inclination to ignore this fact. As long as the love-association of a man and a woman is voluntarily or instinctively treated as an inseparable unity, this inclination is easily explained: The respective psychological tendency has had the effect that in the case of many a loving couple their Free Love theory was soon reduced to idle words without practical value.

The antagonism towards Christian marriage has caused in many Free Lovers, and especially in Varietists, a strong prejudice against anything

and everything included in this complex affair and the term “for life” seems to be terribly obnoxious to them, no matter to what it may refer. Not so with me. As I have plainly shown in a previous chapter, I can see a great deal of value and beauty in the life-companionship and the indissoluble family-relation as it is generally included in Christian marriage, but this pertains only to certain conditions and a particular class of individuals. I do not argue the practicability and expedience of these relations; — that may safely be left to the common sense of any *free* individual. I desire, however, to impress upon your mind the immense importance of considering and treating each relation separately and of taking notice of the great difference in the varied co-operations as to their binding qualities. I wish to remind you of the fact that there are some associations which, even in spite of your will and desire, may cause almost inseparable ties. You ask me: What is to hinder persons from making even these contracts for a year or two? Nothing whatever except the natural feelings and emotions of human beings, but these will be sufficient to prevent free individuals from ever entering into such association of interests except where they are firmly resolved and where they confidently expect that it shall and will be a lasting union. I yet hope to convince you that, after they are freed from the detestable sexual contract and the farcical promise of exclusive love, there will be no reason to dread these relations, although they are meant and hold good *for life!*

XI.

Jealousy and Possession.

VARIETY in the sex-life of almost every healthy human being — how terribly that will shock the average unprepared philistine! And yet, if he is a Freethinker and can reason logically, he will have to admit that this would be only natural, that it would be the necessary result of real freedom in love, and that such freedom would deliver humanity from an immense amount of inharmony and suffering. Forced to such admissions, he will generally exclaim, “I cannot reason with you, but I *feel*, that you are wrong” and his last argument will be something like this: “You could never have felt ardent love for a woman or you would not consider such a state of affairs possible. Unfortunately, jealousy is also a natural feeling and there is no true love without jealousy. If a man is passionately in love with a woman it will make him nervous if she gives but one friendly look to another man — if she kisses another it will almost drive him mad — and the thought of her sexual intercourse with another is simply horrible, unbearable. Who would ever want to share his beloved with another man?”

The last question is very easily answered—Where you cannot possess a woman, you will get no chance to share her with any one!

So far as jealousy is concerned, it becomes necessary to investigate in order to ascertain how much of this will inevitably disappear in freedom, and how much will be left as an ineradicable, natural feeling. Let us consider, therefore, the different motives which cause jealousy to-day:

1. One of the main causes is a silly and barbarous “code of honor” which brings shame, disgrace, and ridicule—not to the deceiver—but to the innocent person who is duped and deceived. That almost all so-called civilized human beings should still be inclined to such a mean and nonsensical view in regard to this one particular relation, the sexual, (a view which they would promptly denounce as atrocious in any other association or contact) shows us very plainly what miserable slaves of superstition we remain.

Surely, there can not be a prompter and safer way of getting rid of this monstrous farce than the proud and just declaration that henceforth we do not wish to be owned, nor to own any one, for this purpose. Where there is no sexual contract, and no sexual “belonging together” is presumed, there cannot be any deceit in sex-relations.

2. The craving to choose for and domineer over a human being causes jealousy. In such cases the man (or woman) generally loves the being of the opposite sex in the same sense that he would “love” a beautiful and valuable *thing* which is his

property. He would like to have its great value appreciated by all; he wants to be envied its possession, but jealously he will watch over it and prevent all others from enjoying that beautiful “thing,” his greatest pleasure consists in being entitled to say to them: “Do not touch this, it is *mine!*”

This is simply meanness and depravity, and any submission to the spirit thus manifested shows miserable weakness, which would be utterly impossible with free men and women.

3. Where jealousy is caused by genuine, passionate love it is simply the fear of being deprived by a more successful rival of the enjoyment of love. Under existing circumstances, the lover cannot satisfy his desire (be it for sexual intercourse or a spiritual union) unless he gains full possession of the woman (through legal or illegal marriage). Every “friendly look” which the beloved gives to another man makes him tremble for fear he shall “lose” her—with the kiss the other lover has already gained a certain right and privilege, so that he must expect to lose everything, while with the act of sexual intercourse he *has* lost everything—she now “belongs” to the other man; possibly he might have a chance to “share” her with another, but that must of course appear revolting to him, as it would bring disgrace to all of them. Hence it is but natural that he should jealously endeavor to keep all others at a safe distance and that he should gladly welcome the statute law or at least the moral restraint which will assist him in this.

Suppose, however, that the lover should know that no victory can ever give to him or to any one else a prescriptive right to the love of this woman, that no love contract or sexual agreement will ever deprive him of the chance to enjoy his love—how will this affect his feeling of jealousy? It will be reduced to that natural selfishness which is unwilling to resign an enjoyment for the benefit of another. Sexual love is and should be the most selfish in this respect, but it is also that love which is most easily and most quickly satisfied. With free men and women it will never be void of hope, will never require permanent resignation. The one and only means by which to gain the satisfaction of it is to create the responsive desire in the beloved being. This jealous striving to gain love may cause many an animated contest, but it will have always only an ennobling influence. So far as spiritual intercourse and all other enjoyments of love are concerned, every true lover in the present “moral” society even is quite magnanimous, and he will often resign a desired enjoyment for the benefit of another, if he feels sure that it will not endanger his property rights in the beloved woman, (which he must guard, of course, as they are his only guarantee that he will have the chance of enjoying her in future). That his generosity does not go very far where her co-enjoyment with another man is in question is not due to his depraved and selfish nature, but to the fact that such co-enjoyment must appear always dangerous, even if it is “purely spiritual.” True love is naturally mag-

namous, it has the decided tendency to create what would be termed unselfishness, but this fact does not show itself to any great extent to-day, for the simple reason that it is equally natural that true love will dread nothing more than to be deprived of every chance—not only to enjoy with—but also to give happiness to the beloved being, through that being becoming the property of another person. In a free society, where no such a thing need ever be dreaded, we would soon have the pleasure of noticing everywhere that a great part—yes, probably the greater part—of the enjoyment of love consists in giving joy and happiness to the beloved.

Close observation must promptly convince us that in many cases—yes, most likely in the majority of cases—jealousy is absolutely independent of love, and furthermore that the anguish, bitterness, and humiliation, the depraving and fatal effects of jealousy are not due directly to the effort to gain or retain love, but in nearly all instances are the result of the struggle for the possession of a human being.

Let us give up, therefore, this idea of possession, not merely of possession through legal or moral laws, but also the idea that the love or the “tribute of love” of any man or woman is due to us. Let us give up sexual possession!

We need not be astonished that the Southerners were so reluctant to give up their slaves, for they represented for them an immense material wealth, and if the ancient Teutons had been asked

to “emancipate” their wives they certainly would have rebelled, for the women did their work for them and were about as valuable in this respect as the slaves were to the Southern planter—but it seems to me that Freethinkers, who have long acknowledged that woman should have equal rights with man, and all progressive women should gladly welcome the idea of giving up this mutual enslaving which causes so much misery and degradation and which brings no benefits whatever to either man or woman.

It may here be claimed that sexual possession has one advantage, that is, that it secures for us an easy and convenient satisfaction of our physical desires without further trouble or expense, but I think that any man or woman who has once tasted the exquisite pleasure of Free Love will promptly reject such a “convenience.”

An opponent has called my attention to the fact that I have advised binding contracts between man and woman for some purposes, that this will constitute a certain degree of possession, and hence will give opportunity for some jealous struggle for the possession of human beings. Very true. A man may have a jealous craving for a certain good cook and housekeeper, whom another man “possesses” as such by virtue of a joint-household contract—but I do not believe that this will ever cause any great misery. Furthermore, the ardent love of a man may create the desire to enter into family-relations with a woman who is bound in this respect to another man by an ex-

clusive contract (I believe that under the existing economic circumstances such contracts will often be exclusive). This is of course a more serious case, especially for this man, because, even if he should gain the passionate love and the responsive desire of the woman this will not justify the latter in breaking her former contract. Resignation will generally be demanded in such a case, but I claim that the longing to enter into family relations is not one of the direct desires of love and that, if the latter are fully satisfied, the non-satisfaction of the former will never wreck the happiness of a human being nor create a disastrous hatred of the successful rival. The direct desire of love, be it ever so ardent and passionate, is simply intimate social and eventually sexual intercourse, and wherever we have gained perfect freedom in this we can truthfully say that we have Freedom in Love and that we have taken from jealousy its poisonous sting.

XII.

The Old and the New Ideal.

AT one time I thought that with the foregoing the theory might be considered complete. The arguments proved to be absolutely irrefutable (with the exception of a few minor and unimportant points, perhaps), the theory fitted into any circumstance and applied favorably to all, young and old, rich and poor. Hence it seemed that there were no more obstacles in the way to hinder prompt action, nothing to prevent us beginning at once the "propaganda of deed!" But, alas, very soon we found that we had not yet investigated and eradicated the most deathly poison of jealousy, that we had not yet attacked the most formidable enemy—the false love-ideal. More tyrannically than legal law; more effectively than any moral feeling, it forces humankind into slavery in love, into mutual possession!

In the first chapter of this book, I called attention to the fact that the introduction of the strict monogamic marriage had the result that constant exclusive love for one human being was accepted

as the ideal. Hence the saying, "A man can truly love but one woman" (and *vice versa*) and that other, "true love is always exclusive." Where this is firmly believed (or "felt instinctively," as some would say), it is sure to create, even in the most beautiful love relation, even under the most favorable circumstances, bitter pangs of jealousy, from which the lovers cannot be saved by any other means than the security which a legal bondage or a moral restraint affords them. This is what has caused the final reactionary weakness of many ardent advocates of Free Love, and it is therefore of the utmost importance that we seriously and searchingly investigate this ideal.

When we speak of true love between a man and a woman, we generally mean love in the stricter sense of the word, that is, the preference of one human being for the satisfaction of love's desires. Hence for all those persons to whom this, the satisfaction of love's desires, appears as a sacred and inseparable unity (the living together as in present marriage) there can be but *one* true love, *i. e.*, the preference for one human being for such living together. As this union should be monogamous, the preference ought to be very positive and distinct, or, in other words, the love should be decidedly exclusive, and furthermore, as such a union necessitates a long duration, the love must be constant in order to be "genuine," that is, of real value.

For a true Freethinker, however, there cannot be any reason why he should consider all these

actions which are expected to be included in this "living together" as a sacred and inseparable unity. He should think of each one separately. He will then find that there are many diverse co-operations and co-enjoyments in which a woman may be the beautiful counterpart of the man, that for each of them the man may prefer a different woman, and that, wherever the preference is positive and distinct, causing a passionate attachment for the respective person, we must call it love. Therefore, it follows that, after we have freed ourselves from superstition and do not make one union the condition for entering into another, a man may truly love several women at the same time!

More easily and probably more frequently than any other motive the desire for that one important co-enjoyment, sexual intercourse, will cause such passionate attachment, and there are many persons who deem this alone worthy to be termed love, who have but a sneer for "platonic love." Hence it becomes necessary to pay particular attention to this. Sexual love is dependent upon the sexual impulse, and in every human being this is subject to such continual and unavoidable changes (from indifference to strong desire), that constancy in this love in the sense of the above ideal is an absolute impossibility, and it is a dangerous folly to expect it. For many practical reasons it is equally foolish to expect that this love will always go to the same person. (If you should have the least doubt about this, just ask

yourself the question whether it would be reasonable to expect that a man should prefer for sexual intercourse a woman who, discouraged and debilitated by severe illness, had no sexual desire whatever—even if he fervently loved her.) Furthermore, we will find that sexual preference may be caused by many different qualities of body and mind, and that the number and variety of motives is increased in the same ratio that human society advances in what we generally call “culture” and “refinement,” because the “spiritual” or intellectual enters more and more into the question of sexual preference. Hence, again, it follows that a number of different women may alternately cause strong sexual love in one man (and *vice versa*, of course). It is not necessary to investigate the other co-operations of man and woman in this respect, as it will be admitted without further argument that in many of these it would be equally absurd to expect that a free choice could always mean the same partner.

The result of our investigation is therefore that, although love in the stricter sense means the decided preference of one human being to all others, hence may be called exclusive, this exclusiveness refers only to the particular union or co-operation for which the choice is made—and to a particular time—and furthermore, that in many co-operations it is absurd to expect that the same person should always receive the exclusive preference.

It follows that, wherever but one kind of love

union between a man and a woman is recognized (marriage) and no other is ever thought of, a permanent exclusive love of one woman (or man) is possible, that is, the same man or the same woman may always be preferred for the entirety, the whole marriage relation. But it further follows that, so soon as we have the courage to consider each kind of love's enjoyments separately and allow perfect freedom of choice in each, it becomes an absurdity to expect that the same man should forever prefer the same woman for every co-enjoyment and co-operation. And thirdly, it follows that, if we should resolve to give the term love to no other feeling than the desire for sexual intercourse, it will always be decidedly exclusive for the time being (if it is the real feeling), but nature itself forbids constancy and stability in this, and it is a practical impossibility that each new desire should go to the same person for the entire duration of sex-life.

We must choose, therefore, between two positions:

1. Retain the first-named of the foregoing theories and adhere to the maxim that there is but one kind of love-union, which must include all, and which we generally call marriage. Then we have good reason to expect exclusive love for a long time in many cases and exclusive love for life under exceptionally favorable circumstances—even under the regime of so-called Free Love. In this case, however, a moral restraint is absolutely necessary to guard "weak mortals" from forgetting in "unguarded moments" that they are not al-

lowed to choose whomsoever they may prefer just now for the satisfaction of one particular passionate desire (which may fill all their thoughts at this moment), but that the only question which they are at liberty to decide is this: Whom do you prefer for the entirety?

2. Real freedom in love, which must, necessarily, lead to variety in love-relations.

We want this real freedom in love because, as we have seen, it will bring us so many advantages, relieve us of so many evils, and cause us no harm. Why then should this one word, *variety*, scare us away from all this beautiful Promised Land?

I receive this answer:

“Because it interferes with the generally accepted Love-Ideal. Every youth and every maiden throughout the civilized world is educated up to this ideal. It is so completely made a part of their feelings that it is exceedingly hard to eradicate. Your argument is sound and practical, but love will not listen to practical reasons.”

And what is this formidable ideal, which threatens to destroy all our beautiful plans, because love will not listen to practical reasons?

I receive the following explanation and I will henceforth term this

THE OLD IDEAL:

“It is not merely (as some coarse and vulgar natures seem to suppose), to find a good mate for sexual intercourse; it means, to find a perfect complement to your entire being, to every part of your

physical and spiritual nature, in one person of the opposite sex. It means, that the lovers shall forever be "everything to each other." It self-evidently includes spiritual love, sexual love, friendship, comradeship, and the rest, and the co-operations, which, as you think, should be considered separately, are all but the natural result of such love. We know that such love is possible, and where it is free from illusions, it will last for life. The ideal state which we desire to reach is one in which every human being shall enjoy such love and in which every loving couple shall forever appear to each other as those beings which men have heretofore placed above the clouds, and called by the titles "God" and "Goddess!" "

In place of this, the old ideal, I offer the following, which will demand a more lengthy explanation and which I will henceforth call

THE NEW IDEAL:

It certainly is not to gain a good mate for sexual servitude for life; neither does it mean ("as some coarse and vulgar natures seem to suppose") to add a little "spice" to the sex-relation by an occasional "piquant" change of partners (that is the safety-valve for your ideal—in a free society there would be no "piquancy" in such a change). It means, to find a perfect complement to your entire individuality, to every part of your physical and spiritual nature, but we neither expect nor desire to find all this in *one* human being. This might be possible for the lower species of

humankind, where life means no more than the satisfaction of the physical desires, but the complex nature of the civilized, intelligent man or woman of to-day requires *many* other human natures to furnish it what it needs to round it out into wholeness and symmetry. Hence, wherever we meet a sympathetic person we will endeavor to find in him or her something, some quality or ability, which forms a beautiful complement to a part of our own being—and wherever we find it we will promptly show our appreciation of and our enjoyment in it, being convinced that in a society freed from superstition it may truthfully be said that “Love worketh no harm.” We think it an idiotic vanity for a man to imagine that he might permanently appear as a “God” to an intelligent woman, and we would call it equally ridiculous if a woman should think that she might be the “Goddess” of a sane man for a life-time.

Having these convictions, we object to the definition of love given at the beginning of this chapter as too narrow and superficial. To prefer one human being to all others for any certain purpose may *cause* love, but it is not love. Love is the lively appreciation of the value which a human being has for our own well-being. Very many different things may cause such a feeling, but the attempt to classify Love according to its causes appears to us utterly vulgar, misleading, and useless, because many different causes may result in the same feeling, the same love. We hear of sisterly or brotherly love vs. conjugal love, of spiritual vs.

sensual love, of platonic vs. sexual love, and so on, but these distinctions are merely arbitrary; they are extremely vague, embarrassing, and deluding, because no one can know definitely how far any affection was influenced by the sensual or by the sexual instinct. Hence we discard such a classification and we do so gladly because of course for us there can be no reason why we should have any special reverence for the "purely spiritual" or any disrespect for the sensual or sexual. Accepting the foregoing definition of the word and excluding as unworthy of the name of love the craving for possession of a human being for the purpose of ruling and controlling that being, we say that there is but *one kind* of love, although there is a vast difference in the intensity of the feeling as well as in its method of expression and its constancy. That love which can truthfully say to the beloved: "Thy happiness is my happiness, thy woe is my woe," being both fervent and constant might probably be justly termed the ideal love, but there is no more reason why this should exclude other love, when existing between a man and a woman, than when it appears between persons of the same sex or between a mother and her child. How, then, shall we explain the rapturous love-songs of our poets, which express the most passionate preference for *one* human being, in which there can be no doubt as to the exclusiveness of the affection, in which the beloved is described as the peerless "Angel" or "Goddess?"—Must we promptly reject these as nonsense, sham, and mockery, or will we

declare that we wise people would never reach such a foolish enthusiasm in our feelings? Ah, no; every man who has once felt real passionate love for a woman, knows that the "ravings" of the poet need not necessarily be "exaggerations," that they may truthfully express his thoughts and feelings. Hence there is such a thing as passionate exclusive love? Yes, and where it receives adequate response its enjoyment is so extremely blissful that we may justly term it the *ideal enjoyment of love*. But we promptly reject the foolish idea that such a passion may be constant (unless it is a constant craving from a distance), and we laugh at the absurd and futile efforts of men and women to preserve this passion or lengthen its enjoyment by a mutual promise, a contract, or by "living together." We offer this explanation of the poet's feelings: If a person finds or believes he has found in another a perfect complement to an essential part of his nature it will cause the feeling of love. The more important this part seems to the lover the more fervent the love will be and it will appear exclusive at such times and for so long a period (and no longer) as all of the thoughts and feelings of the lover are centered upon the desire to complement this particular part of his being. If, at such a time, the lover meets the beloved, if the one fully responds to the feelings of the other, if his or her thoughts are similarly centered, and both of them freely submit to the spontaneous desire of the moment, they will then reach the ideal enjoyment of love. They will be "everything to each

other," they will "forget all the world around them for each other," each will fully possess the other, each can truthfully say: "Thou art mine and I am thine"—but woe to the lovers who believe that they can secure such happiness for the future by a binding contract or who try to extend the mutual possession beyond the continuance of the absolute spontaneous exclusiveness in their feelings; they will gain nothing and will spoil their chances for future ideal enjoyments. Remember that these are but grand and beautiful "moments in our lives," which are too blissful to last long.

To avoid misunderstanding, I must now answer two objections to my elucidations which have come to my notice:

1. Obj.—"There are many cases known of passionate love, which lasted for a long time, yes, even for life, which caused the lovers much agony and misery, and which could not be overcome by will-power. This shows that your assertions in regard to exclusiveness are not correct."

Answer.—I have already alluded to the fact that the constancy of passionate exclusive love may last a longer time where it receives no gratification of its desires. However, where this is real constancy in the feelings, where it does not merely mean frequent spells of strong desire intermingled with many practical, prosaic thoughts and aspirations (which is generally the case) it is sure to cause insanity or death in a short time. My remarks refer only to fully reciprocated love having unrestricted freedom for spontaneous action, and

I claim that for such my assertion will prove true in every case, that the duration of real exclusiveness in the feelings of lovers is a question, not of days, but of hours, that the attempt to keep these feelings continuously active causes mere shams, and that the artificial means applied for the purpose are extremely harmful. I have already described in what manner the enthusiastic believers in the old ideal manage to create a sham exclusiveness for a long time or for life even.

2. Obj.—“Your description of the ‘grand moments’ is neither more nor less than an undue glorification of sensual pleasures.”

Answer.—I most emphatically deny this. They may be what you call “purely spiritual;” under favorable circumstances they may be realized even by two persons of the same sex without any sensual thoughts. If you understood my remarks to be merely a description of a beautiful sexual intercourse, then you have made a great mistake, for they mean infinitely more. Many men and women have thus ideally enjoyed love (even under present perverted conditions) without any thought of sexual intercourse and many more will do so in the future.

No, these ideal enjoyments need not necessarily include sexual intercourse, and free men and women will do more to establish this fact than all your religious and moral codes have ever done. On the other hand, we claim that each and every sex-act which an intelligent human being does en-

joy should be the result and the climax of such a "grand moment."

Very often indeed that which you call sensuality will do a great deal to bring such "grand moments," and it is exactly for this reason that we do not share your contempt of the word and what it implies. Of course the present unnatural moral code, which by its absurd and tyrannical restraint causes so much abnormal and morbid craving, could not fail to have the result that very often the only thought filling the minds of accordant lovers is the desire for physical pleasures. In such cases the ideal enjoyment, *i. e.*, the perception and appreciation of the valuable complement, will be of such extremely short duration that it will not satisfy the human being endowed with a higher intellect than that of the lower animals. It is the so-called "spiritual" or mental element in man which enables him to enjoy this greatest pleasure, (to perceive and fervently appreciate his beautiful counterpart in another human form), for hours instead of a few minutes. We have no contempt for "merely physical" enjoyment; it is beautiful indeed, but we are convinced that in freedom every person of even only moderate intelligence will promptly perceive how vastly this pleasure may be enhanced and prolonged by the addition of the "spiritual" element; the former will never be the sole object of man's thoughts after we have discarded the tyrannical sexual compulsion, which directly forces many a person to-day to make the one object, the satisfaction of his "merely phy-

sical" desires, his or her special and all-absorbing study.

In conclusion, I will say that a certain degree of sensual sympathy is always necessary for the ideal enjoyment of love. For this reason it will happen far more frequently between a man and a woman (even the so-called "merely spiritual" enjoyments) than between persons of the same sex.

To sum up our conclusions regarding exclusiveness in love: In a free society genuine love will *never* be exclusive. A person, free from superstition, who truly loves one human being is very well able to love many more. What may appear as exclusiveness is but the temporary concentration of the thoughts on one subject, which in love as in all other pleasures, is essential for the highest, the ideal enjoyment.

* * *

Christian marriage and the old, superstitious love-ideal will forever retain for each other the relation of cause and effect. As I have said, the former naturally produced the latter, and I will add that, wherever the minds of men and women are still dominated by the latter, the unnatural "exclusive-love-for-one-ideal," it invariably leads to Christian marriage or to a farcical imitation of it, which is still worse!

In most "civilized" countries the exclusive control of the marriage relation has now passed from the hands of the priests to those of the trifle less "sacred" State. Wherever this change has taken place it has been hailed with joy by all Freethink-

ers as a great advance, but it would be ridiculous to claim that this change has in any way “purified” marriage or made it a nobler institution.

Indissoluble Christian marriage was never a general success, it always caused demoralizing hypocrisy and terrible agonies, and it became more and more unendurable as men and women progressed in education. Hence, wherever the people had some influence in the matter, government gradually became a more lenient master, so that finally in many states (as in Wisconsin) a divorce can be obtained quite easily. Here again I must state, however, that the assertion that we will find the most happy and beneficent marriages where divorce can be effected most easily, is nowhere substantiated by facts.

And that most important progressive step, the “free union” of the Free-Lovers, what has that shown to us? Experience has clearly proved it to be but a farcical imitation of Christian marriage, for which a real success is utterly impossible.

The “platform” of the Free-Lovers may be thus briefly summarized: “We oppose any and all legal interference with love-affairs, we assert for all men and women the moral and legal right to consummate and dissolve love-unions the same as other contracts and agreements.” I heartily agree with this, and I feel profound admiration for and am grateful to those noble men and women who, even under the existing unfavorable conditions, had the courage to act upon their convictions, but I regret that, in making use of the freedom which

in many cases they bought so dearly, they could conceive of no better system than an imitation of Christian marriage, one whose ideal was to “live together as husband and wife,” to be “everything to each other” in the realm of love.

Let us now examine the supposed advantages which theory claimed for the “free unions,” and see whether practical experience verified the prophecy. Theory said: “1.—If their love is found to have been a mistake or if mutual affection ceases, no prostitution will follow, as they are free to part and enter into more suitable unions. 2.—The fear of losing each other will guard them against the indifference and lack of courteous attention so common in legal marriage. 3.—If their love is genuine it will last and they will be a happy couple for life.”

Practical experience proved every one of these arguments to be a fallacy. 1.—It was found that many a man, although otherwise inclined, continued to cohabit with the woman simply because he valued very highly his home and his house-keeper, that many a woman, although sexual love had ceased, still “granted favors” to the man, simply because she warmly appreciated him as her comrade and help-mate or as the father of her child, and, furthermore, that many a sexual relation was continued for no other cause than practical economic considerations. In all these cases the “prostitution” necessarily appeared far more humiliating than where the “marital relation” was considered a sacred duty for life.

2.—It was soon found that there is an immense difference between wooing the love of a free human being and the fear of losing the affection of a superstitious man or woman already won. While the former is elevating and ennobling, the latter is humiliating and depraving. The striving to gain the love of a human being (not the possession) will call into action the noblest part of man's or woman's nature, but where love enjoys a hearty reciprocative feeling it should be free from doubts or fears in order to be truly beautiful, and the constant fear of losing the *possession* of a valued person (as in the case of the "free union") will always have the tendency to arouse the meanest and basest propensities in human nature. I will state right here that, although I fully perceive the great danger and the possibility of the horrible results of a relation in which the lovers "take each other for life, for better or worse," I can still see something beautiful, something of real value in that association, while the "living together" in the "free unions," in which the lovers are asked in their most blissful moments to consider the possibility of a "mistake" and the probability of a change in the feelings, appears to me as a farcical imitation, which discards the good and retains the evil features of the original institution.

3.—The saddest disappointments were in store for those Free-Lovers who accepted as true the third supposition, for they found that, where "freedom of choice" was not a meaningless phrase, not a single love proved to be "genuine." The "living

together" in the "free unions" turned out to have about the same abating effect on passionate love as had the "living together" in real marriage, and wherever a couple fully realized their freedom, kept up an intimate social intercourse with others, and saw no reason to guard against a warmer feeling towards any one, it was only a question of a short time when one of them would "fall in love" with another man or woman and dissolve the union. In such a case the theory demanded from the discarded partner prompt resignation, a gracious acceptance of the results of "freedom of choice," and a fair settlement of whatever economic association there might be, but experience showed very plainly that this is far more easily preached than practiced. The man who, for months or years, has been accustomed to find at his home, when he returns from his daily labor, a partner willing to minister to his physical and spiritual wants, a friend, who shares his woes and joys, may be sensible of a remarkable cooling off in his feelings towards this partner, his passionate love may have long since changed into a decidedly quiet friendship—nevertheless, when he learns that he is to be discarded for another, that his partner has resolved to "give herself" to another, he will feel far more inclined to shoot the woman, the preferred lover, or himself (even if he is a very good-natured fellow otherwise) than to swallow in serene resignation the bitter pill. And on the other hand, the woman watches with great anxiety the wooing of another, which she fears may rob her of the love of

her partner. If he should show considerable interest in another woman, if he should happen to give to that woman a look of enthusiastic admiration, she will tremblingly ask the question, "Does he love her?" Woe to her, if she believes that the answer must be "yes," that would be equivalent to the loss of his love, for of course "he cannot truly love two women!" And if he should really leave her, she will soliloquize thus: "I surely believed that his love made him all my own, but his love was not genuine, it was false, for another woman possesses him now!"—and all her enthusiasm for the cause of freedom can not deliver her from the tortures of jealousy nor make sweet the bitter humiliation of desertion by her lover, of defeat by another woman. An uncontrollable hatred must be the result. In all such cases jealousy proved to be altogether too "natural" to be overcome by theories. For these reasons, wherever such a "free union" meant more than a short concubinage for the sole purpose of mutual sexual satisfaction, it either ended in a tragedy, or the dread of such a tragedy influenced the couple, for the sake of preserving their union, to cautiously guard themselves against any loving inclination towards others, which of course was equivalent to giving up their freedom in love.

These experiences in the Free Love movement have found several different explanations, which have forced the acceptors of the theory into various courses and according to which we can divide them into the following classes:

Class 1 we will term the "Ultra-Exclusivists." These men and women have not repudiated their principles; they still oppose any and all legal interference with love-affairs; they still affirm the moral and legal right of every man and woman to consummate and dissolve love-unions with the same freedom as other contracts, in order that all may have a chance to promptly correct mistakes in "mating," which are always liable to occur with erring men—but they now sing with glowing enthusiasm the praises of the Old Ideal, the exclusive love for life of one companion, and consequently of life-long monogamic marriage; wherever true sympathy exists between a man and a woman they consider this ideal worthy of a great many sacrifices. I have already shown in what manner these persons manage to preserve their exclusiveness.

I will promptly admit that this is a progressive step to substitute conscience and voluntary self-control for the rule of the State in the attempt to sustain monogamic marriage, but a theory which goes no farther than this does not relieve us of a single one of the many social evils described in this book, and what I said of the "Happy Marriage of To-day" is equally true of the most fortunate "mating" in these unions.

2. The second class is composed of the "Puritans." These people noticed that in almost every case the "failure" of the "free unions" was caused by the sexual impulse, which is so deplorably unsteady and unreliable! Most of these couples would

have been quite contented to belong to each other for eternity, if some "devilish sensual charm" in others had not caused them to forget all the goodness of their partners! Hence this class, with more consistency than wisdom, concluded, à la Tolstoi, that this "base impulse," the sexual instinct, which, with its frivolous whims, caused all the disturbance, should be reduced to the minimum in all men and women.

I have disposed of these ascetics in a previous chapter, but fairness demands that I should state something which speaks in their favor. So far as a free and unrestrained intercourse between the sexes is concerned, many of these hyper-spiritual beings have reached really enviable conditions. They are, in fact, the only consistent moralists. I say: Do not try to force this impulse into an unnatural course (neither by "self-control" nor by legal or moral restraint); give it a chance for natural action and you will find that it is truly beautiful; they say: "Kill it!" Both views may be called logical, consistent conclusions drawn from the experiences of human society and either course would give us freedom in the social intercourse of men and women (and no other way will lead us to this goal). I believe that I have given sufficient reasons why the ascetic solution should be promptly rejected.

3. The "Theorists." This class contains by far the greatest number. They have noticed the "failures," and their explanation is extremely simple: "The unjust economic conditions in general and

woman's dependent position in particular are to blame!" They fully uphold the theory, but they have given up as useless all active propaganda in its behalf. They say: "Let us work for economic freedom. After having attained that, freedom in love will be the logical result."

Probably no other factor has caused so much weakness and reaction in the ranks of the Free-Lovers as such superficial and fallacious arguments as these. Conventional marriage is of course to a great extent an economic question, and economic dependence is therefore an important barrier to freedom in marrying, but it is an absurdity to claim that it is the only barrier. Do you really wish to assert that it was an economic difficulty, which nearly drove to insanity that man whose partner discarded him to live with another? Was it economic dependence which aroused such bitter hate in the heart of that jealous woman? No, there are other difficulties which make it an absolute impossibility to retain for life freedom to obey the desire of the heart in the choice of a partner with whom to "live." Suppose for a moment that we had ideal economic conditions now. Karl Heinzen's theory could then be put into practice. Every youth of eighteen could take a wife, live with her so long as he loved her, and part from her when he got tired of her or fell in love with another. And the woman, seeing that there is "no money in it" either way, would say "good bye" with a pleasant smile and promptly look around for another husband. A very pretty theory indeed!—but it is hard

to understand how any person with a fair knowledge of human nature can have the least faith in such illusions, and the fact that so many intelligent men still persist in saying that economic freedom will promptly settle all these difficulties, shows very plainly that they have not given very much serious thought to the important subject of love and sex-relations.

For freedom in love there are many far more formidable enemies than our unjust economic conditions.

In regard to women, I claim this: Give to all the women of our country absolute economic independence and you have not given them freedom in love, you have not even given to the Free Lovers among them a constant "freedom of choice"—but, give to all women freedom in love as I understand it (*i. e.*, simply deliver them from the superstitions in this sphere) and in less than a year they will have far more economic independence than the men can boast of now!

4. The "Deserters," that is to say, those men and women, who on account of the failures have deserted the cause of freedom in theory as well as in practice. It is with great satisfaction that I make the statement that this class contains by far the smallest number. The number of failures in the old system is so enormous that any person who has once studied the system will stand by the new theory in spite of the saddest disappointments.

5. The "Varietists." These are certainly the most progressive thinkers among the Free Lovers.

They love freedom too much to be satisfied with the theory of class One, who simply change the name of the tyrant; they know too much of human nature to belong to class Two; they have given too much serious thought to the subject to be satisfied with the "poor excuse" of class Three, and they have too much faith in liberty to desert the cause. Hence they have accepted that general result of their experiments, the inconstancy of love wherever there was real freedom, not as a sign of serious mistakes, but as the natural and truly beneficial condition to which the human mind should become accustomed. "Variety is the spice of life," "we like variety in all other pleasures and enjoyments, why not in love also;" "sex-magnetism is neutralized after a while and then a change of partners is necessary to give it new strength." These and similar arguments were offered and in some cases they may have soothed somewhat the fury of that dangerous enemy of freedom, Jealousy. It is certainly due to the Varietists that the "propaganda of deed" of the Free-Lovers did not result in a general failure. Their theory must be regarded as a repudiation of the old ideal or at least of a part of it. Although they still indorse a certain "belonging together," they do not say that to be the ideal state it must last for life, but are satisfied if it lasts but a year or a month. If they had gone but one step farther and declared that it could and should last but a few hours in each instance, they would have seized the fundamental truth, and would not have thought any "living

together" necessary for the purpose. As it is, however, they also have retained this worst part of the old ideal. Of course in the carrying out of such a theory they were hampered even more than the other classes by the existing economic conditions. The restriction of freedom of action, which a home and household, joint financial interests, and, above all, a family relation, necessarily involved, made it often quite impossible to effect the "change" which the heart desired and the theory sanctioned. It is evident that in this respect woman is at a far greater disadvantage than man, and it seems that the main hope of all Varietists lies in acquiring an absolute economic independence for women. As to the question how to reach such a condition there is yet an immense difference of opinion.

As I do not wish to be misunderstood, I must add that the above remarks refer only to the theories of the Varietists so far as they in any manner have been offered to the public. I do not doubt that some of them rejected the old and accepted the new ideal long before I thought of it, and that they have acted according to their convictions and probably even expressed their views to others. I certainly do not care to claim the honor of a new discovery!

After having thus given a short illustration of the different courses of the Free-Lovers, I will now try to show the mistakes which caused their failures.

My criticism may be summed up in these words: They have tried to live in freedom according to an

ideal which originated under the most tyrannical compulsion, and which never could have entered into the minds of intelligent human beings without such compulsion.

In their observations and the conclusions drawn therefrom, they made the fatal mistake of supposing that the weak point of marriage is its indissolubility or the difficulty of dissolution. The fact is, that the difficulty of dissolution is the *only* feature of marriage which gives to the institution a certain value, and that the weak point of marriage is *marriage itself*.

In reality, their Free Love meant no more than Free Marriage. This being a contradiction in itself, it is of course impossible of attainment.

Another mistake, which has not done so much harm but ought to be noticed, is that the importance of legal interference has been over-estimated by all Free Lovers. As to the “control” and “regulation” of the love-affairs and sex-relations, our government has never played any other part than that of a ridiculously awkward and miserably vulgar clown, who has enacted a disgusting farce whenever he tried to “settle” anything in this line, and who has not one-tenth part of the influence on the love- and sex-relations of the people that the Free-Lovers ascribe to him.

And the remedy which I propose? It is so extremely simple that it is a wonder that it was not applied long ago. Discard marriage altogether; then it will be a matter of utter indifference to you whether government pleases to make divorce quite

easy or impossible. Discard the old, superstitious love-ideal and accept the new one; then firmly resolve to be free in love and you *are* free; find a number of other men and women who have freed themselves from superstition and you can make full use of your freedom in spite of all the priests and governments in the world! No “civilized” country has any law which forces you to make any sexual- or love-contract, no government in the world will bother about your love-affairs, and even the power of the Czar of all the Russias will not be sufficient to control or regulate your sexual relations if you cease to be so foolish as to give notice to the world when you desire to enjoy love in this manner. And as to Home, Household, and Family, you should not forget that these are to a great extent economic affairs and hence must be dependent upon the economic conditions surrounding you. For these you should make such contracts as may appear advantageous for the present and future. It is true of course that any such a contract means a restriction of your personal liberty, but it is equally true that, under existing circumstances, you secure thereby in many cases so many other liberties, that the net balance may be even an increase of your freedom of action.

To be perfectly explicit, I must state that by discarding marriage I mean of course the discarding of any and all sexual living together (which in fact is the essence of marriage), and I here challenge all Freethinkers to show me the least ad-

vantage in such "living together." Discard this, accept the new love-ideal, and you have the perfect solution of one of the most important of all social questions!

XIII.

Ethical Views on Coition.

AS a result of Christian teachings, the great majority of "civilized" people still believe that the sex-act is something so vile and unclean that a decent person ought to be ashamed to mention it. In sharp contrast to this view, most of the Free Lovers have given to the act such an exalted position that this has become as dangerous to true freedom in love as the former view. In most of the valuable treatises on this subject which argue in favor of freedom, we find that, wherever the ethical view of coition is given, it is referred to as the act "which gives origin to a new life." This is a serious blunder, which is sure to cause confusion. Whatever opinion you may hold in regard to the "intentions of nature," or of what the conditions should be, you should remember that, if we wish to reform, we must deal with facts and not with illusions—and the fact is, that not one-fiftieth part of the sex-acts are procreative acts; furthermore, that the relation is not very liable to be materially changed in the future unless the continence-enthusiasts should advance far better arguments for

their theory than they have given to us so far. Let us cease these futile efforts to gain respect by deception. The fact that it is natural, that it gives us joy, and that it engenders love, should be sufficient to free the mind of every radical thinker from all contempt of the sex-act, despite the scurrilous aspersions of the fanatics.

The sex-act of itself is neither vile and unclean nor anything particularly beautiful or noble, least of all anything lofty or sacred; it is simply the satisfaction of a natural impulse, the same as eating and drinking. The fact, however, that for a beautiful satisfaction of this desire we need the loving inclination of another human being and that the delight of the gratification consists not only in receiving, but as much in bestowing pleasure, gives to the hunger for sexual intercourse an immense ethical value (in sharp contrast to the desire to eat and drink), but let us not forget that this value can be utilized only where the freedom of the individual in this respect is limited neither by legal nor moral laws nor by any contract or relation.

In order to attain a natural and unconstrained intercourse between the sexes, freed from the dread of love and all abnormal, unhealthy cravings, a sound and rational conception of the natural function is of the utmost importance. Both of the unwarranted extremes, "dragging it through the mire" and "raising it above the clouds" are decidedly dangerous; they are very liable to cause abnormal nervous excitement and morbid illusions.

There is not the slightest danger that any free

woman will ever forget how vastly the importance of coition is increased in those exceptional cases in which it becomes a procreative act. Give her the power to decide in every case whether it shall be merely an amorous enjoyment or a generative act and you may rest assured that the latter will always receive the reverent attention which it deserves.

Another grave error which the Free-Lovers are very apt to make is to insist upon such sayings as "love alone can sanctify a sexual embrace." This is also extremely vague and misleading. The conclusion which will always be drawn from such a sentence is "love *does* always sanctify a sexual embrace," and this is either presuming an absurdly narrow conception of the word "love" or it again leads to that disastrous error that the inevitable result of mutual love between a man and a woman must be sexual intercourse. Fervent love may exist between a man and a woman and still coition with each other might be a "degradation," yes, it might even rank below the sexual enjoyment of another couple who would not deserve to be called lovers.

The one and only justification of coition is spontaneous mutual desire for the association.

If we should say, "Love alone can justify a man and a woman in entering into family relations (*i. e.*, joining interests in the rearing and educating of children), or in establishing a home and a common household, or in joining purses and taking a trip to Europe together," we could substantiate these assertions fully as easily as the

foregoing quotation from the arguments of the Free-Lovers could be sustained, but they also would have to be called unwise and misleading. This idea of presuming that a particular union or co-operation or a number of them must necessarily result from any true love between a man and a woman has grown to be such a dreadful tyrant that we should carefully beware of making remarks which are apt to popularly strengthen that assumption. If you are bound to show something which true love will always do, if you must have some formula (I cannot see the necessity), then let it be no other than this: "True love always desires to promote the happiness of the beloved!"



XIV.

Love and Friendship in Free Society.

IN the second part of the chapter on "Our Children," I have given brief suggestions for education in a "free society," so far as sexuality is concerned, and have mentioned the beneficent results of such a change from present methods. This is nothing new, of course. Thousands of intelligent men and woman are convinced that it is the only manner in which we can expect ever to make education truly conducive to health of mind and body, that it is the best way of guarding our children against the dangers of sex-life. The great majority of these reformers, however, do not seem to realize that such "knowing" youths and maidens, who are truly healthy in mind and body, after they have reached the normal development of their sex-nature, will demand with irresistible force the full and natural satisfaction of their natural impulse. For the adherents of the old love-ideal this will forever cause a sad dilemma, but in our free society we have no reason to deplore this fact. On the contrary, we shall watch with intense pleasure and satisfaction the development of this *beautiful* im-

pulse, which throws such a glorious embellishing light upon all the members of the opposite sex, which fills our youths and maidens with such a fervent desire to appear as good, as noble, as beautiful, as they can in order to gain the love which their hearts crave. We have given them all our knowledge of how to lead a healthful and happy sex-life; we have freed them from the dangers of unnatural piquant charms, which might lead them to morbid sensuality; we have taught them to consider their freedom in love as their most precious, inalienable right, and hence we can say to them without doubt or anxiety, "Love never worketh harm! For you, free men and women, there is no necessity to guard your hearts against any sympathy or love. Give freely and unreservedly whatever you have of these feelings, and you will be sure to receive a beautiful recompense." As to the quantity and character of the physical actions of love, in a free society, I do not claim to know anything, but I do claim, that these actions almost without exception, will mean the satisfaction of natural spontaneous desires, and therefore whatever course they may take or however frequent they may appear, they will "work no harm."

I have previously shown what will prevent the youth from indulging in sexual action before having reached full maturity (aside from the influence of parents and older friends, which, of course, will be quite powerful). As to the young maidens, nature itself has given them a valuable protection. For them, the first initiation into the physical

pleasures of love is associated with some bodily pain. In a free society full development only will make the desire strong enough to create the willingness to suffer the pain. Under existing circumstances, or so long as "submission" is considered the unavoidable "tribute of love," this natural protection is of course valueless.

One of the first acts of "independence" of our young girl, after she has reached sexual maturity, will be to demand one little room as quite her own, which she will adorn with all her feminine skill and make it a cozy retreat for her "ideal enjoyments of love," and in which she will receive as her visitor any man, woman or child with whom she wishes to be alone. Having fortified her with a thorough knowledge of herself, and having instilled into her heart keen enthusiasm for freedom in love, the parents or guardians will gladly grant her the opportunity, feeling sure that, whenever further advice or assistance from them is needed, it will be promptly and confidently asked of her instructors.

Of course our young woman will experience the same change in her feelings towards the opposite sex as does the girl of to-day; she will also notice that the company of men begins to have a peculiar charm for her, but she will see nothing "dangerous" in the condition, nor will it cause her any morbid brooding or hysterical illusions. At first, she may feel somewhat timid and bashful, dreading that she may not be able to arouse any reciprocal affection in a sympathetic man. Very soon,

however, she will attain ease and confidence, being buoyed up by the joyful perception, that her own strong and healthy desire for love gives to her person such a charm that it always enables her to gain the love of some congenial man. She will fully appreciate the great advantage of frank and unrestrained social intercourse with many free men and women, which gives her cheerful hope and fervent trust (instead of the unrealizable and unhealthful illusions of the conventional girl), which prompts her to the extremely pleasant and remunerative endeavor to find some beautiful counterpart of herself in every sympathetic person, and which enables her, whenever she has found such counterpart, be it spiritual or physical or both, to enjoy him to her heart's content without any fear or anxiety, and without thereby placing upon herself any oppressive fetters. And whenever she wishes to enjoy the company of a man, at day or night, where she will be secure from the intrusion of others, she will not hesitate to invite him to her room or accompany him to his. This will not necessarily mean sexual intercourse, it may not mean any love-union whatever, but, if it is love, which has caused the wish for the *tete-a-tete*, and if the spontaneous desire of both has led them to the highest physical enjoyment, there will be no reason for sadness or repentance. They incur thereby no new responsibilities, no new duties, they part as they met, free human beings, who have not barred themselves by foolish promises or oaths from any

joys and pleasures which this beautiful world may be able to offer them in future.

I am afraid that some would-be students of human nature may here accuse me of "*naivete*" and wish to enlighten me thus: "That might be beautiful, but it is impossible because it is unnatural. If a refined woman has once shared such joys with a man she will never afterwards be indifferent to him; she will feel instinctively that she now belongs to him for life. It is only where all the finer qualities of woman's nature have been killed by vulgar surroundings or terrible experiences that it is possible for her to freely change her lovers without severe pain."

In answer to such remarks, I would say: Remember that the parting of the lovers in this case does not imply the dissolution of any "relation" as you understand the word, and that it never will be interpreted as meaning freedom to "choose another in exchange for the present mate." As explained in a previous chapter, we certainly expect our lovers to continue to love each other (and so will they, although they might consider it ridiculous and superfluous to swear to it), but we consider it an absurd idea to think that this must disqualify them forever for seeing anything beautiful and love-worthy in others. If your remarks about the refined woman of to-day are true (and I believe that they are) then they mean that she feels that she will love this man forever, and as you have taught her that the only legitimate, the only moral, yes, the only possible way of enjoying his

love is to belong to him exclusively, the two things may well appear as the same to her. Free her from your abominable superstition and we will have good reason to rejoice over the original "natural" inclination. I hold further, that this is not a particularly feminine characteristic, and that in a free society it would be equally true of the masculine sex. If the men of to-day do not justify this belief, it is simply because, with the great majority of them, the first sexual pleasures are such a miserable mockery of what we would call the ideal enjoyments of love that their "finer qualities" had no occasion to show themselves, and have in many cases been killed altogether.

Think of the healthy, lusty youth of to-day, who, after having finished his day's labor, feels an intense longing for physical union with a woman! What will he do? He may torture himself in sleepless nights with the hard and bitter fight against his "sinful" thoughts; he may be forced to resort to self-abuse; he may give his wages for several days of hard labor to a prostitute, who (probably with an ironical smile at his juvenile impetuosity) will promptly and quickly give him a satisfaction, which leaves no other after-taste than shame, disgust, self-reproach, and the contempt of the woman he has just carressed; or he may "seduce" a "weak" girl, in which case either his honor leads him to a depraving slavery in misery and poverty, or the justifiable dread of the latter forces him to sneaking hypocrisy and deceit. What other way is there open for him?

What will such a youth do in a free society? He will go into the most respected and self-respecting society of the town and would look around among the fairest and best women there. For the poor youth of to-day that would of course be a decidedly useless and extremely humiliating course, for he would see on all of the women there one of the following labels: "Hands off, property of Mr. —," "Property-rights applied for," and "Reserved for the eternal possession of an ideal man, who can support a family." In our society, however, not a single woman will be thus labeled, hence our youth will promptly exert himself to win the one he thinks the prettiest and best of them all for a beautiful love-idyl. His warm affection for the chosen one may not always be able to arouse the reciprocal feeling, but it will have to be shown in a very awkward manner to be anything but pleasant and agreeable to any free woman to whom it is addressed. But why should he not have excellent chance for success, seeing that our tastes in regard to the "prettiest and best" are fortunately so extremely varied, and seeing how easily this youth can be made "the happiest of mortals!"

Suppose, however, that he does not succeed. Even that will not cause a calamity. Whenever a man is certain that no property rights of any kind are to blame, the fact that, in spite of his ardent wooing, his love gains no response, will always abate his passion to quite an extent.

How will it be though, if another man, who has for the time being engrossed all the thoughts of

the beloved woman, is the cause of his defeat? Will he then pursue the preferred suitor with bitter hatred and murderous thoughts of revenge? Certainly not, for these are the feelings engendered by the struggle for the possession of a human being, and will be utterly impossible where the new love-ideal is accepted. Will he withdraw despondingly into his lonely chamber, filled with bitter contempt for the world in general and woman in particular? No, for he is not imbued with that silly idea that a man must find "everything" in one woman. As the sexual impulse developed within himself independently of any particular love, it will not be extinguished by the peremptory "No" of one woman. The disappointment may somewhat weaken the impulse for a short time, but very soon it will lead him with renewed energy and courage, if not to the "best," then to the *next-best*. This course of action need not diminish his hope to win the "best" in the future, while a persecution of the present victor would of course be out of the question, as that would be the one and only sure way to spoil his chances.

The *next-best*! I am afraid that some young woman reader will be terribly shocked when she reads this. What a profanation it may seem to her of that grand love-passion, which prefers death to the thought of another.

Such a theory may indeed rob many of your sensational novels of the unwholesome charm of lugubrious romance, and make them appear rather silly instead, but in the beautiful reality of a

free society you will find no pleasure in indulging in such unhealthful and eccentric imaginings. Think of society as it really is to-day and ask yourselves the question how much actual choice there is for men and women in that momentously important concern of mating for life, and you will have to admit that there is nothing terrible in the fact that our hero is perfectly satisfied with the "second choice" among all the women of his acquaintance. Do you not know that in the majority of your most beautiful love-matches the bridegroom could actually not be considered as any better than about the twenty-fifth choice of the woman for sex-intercourse, if we should suppose that she had perfectly free choice among all men? You might reply, that although this may really be so, the bride is not conscious of the fact and feels for the time being that this is her one and only choice. To this I would answer that there is no reason why our hero should not feel just the same *for the time being*. For him this would be perfectly sufficient for an ideal enjoyment of love without the possibility of a bitter after-taste, while for the fashionable bride the future may prove the choice to have been a fatal mistake resulting in life-long pain and misery. I believe that Oliver Wendell Holmes was very nearly correct when he said: "Nature makes every man love all women and trusts the trivial matter of special choice to the commonest accident," and he was equally right when he added: "Young fellows have hung a matrimonial millstone round their necks, taking it for a life-preserver!"

The task of our young man might appear far more difficult if he should happen to be a stranger in the place, but it would not be so in fact. In a free society people will of course become acquainted with each other far more easily than to-day and nobody there would have to remain a stranger for any long period. Free women will not be afraid of men any more than men are afraid of their own sex to-day, probably even far less so. Our young friend will have no trouble either in finding the persons with whom he wishes to become acquainted. As a natural result of freedom in love, there will be far more public gatherings and far more attention will be paid to the establishment and artistic adornment of public meeting-places, amusement-halls, and the like than to-day. It would be a great mistake to assume that the influence and power of the sexual instinct becomes apparent only when there is actual present desire for sexual intercourse. In every well-balanced man or woman it will give at all times a highly agreeable sensual charm to the opposite sex and even those who are sexually weak are very probably much mistaken if they think that the pleasure which the company of a woman affords them is merely "spiritual." I believe, therefore, that in a free society men will spend almost their entire leisure hours in the company of women. I can hardly imagine any social gathering where the society of women would not be agreeable to free men, and a public place of amusement "for men only" must be considered as almost out of the question in a free society. Some women readers

might think that, to make this true, the men of to-day would have to be completely remodeled, but this would be a mistake. Under existing circumstances, if a man does not happen to be in the market for a house-wife and is too conscientious to “seduce” or play the part of a Don Juan, the society of all the “labeled” women can indeed have but very little attraction for him and must be extremely disagreeable to him in many cases, but remove the labels, remove the icy barriers, and the men (and the women also) will promptly remodel themselves, and their places for public meetings will soon be grand and beautiful temples of joy, where the ever-charming wooing of sexual love is embellished by music, song, and dance, where an animated spiritual intercourse can take place amidst surroundings made delightful to all the senses by genius and artistic skill.

Having removed all the foolish barriers of superstition, natural inclination will constantly draw men and women together and free and unrestrained social intercourse will enable them to become perfectly acquainted with each other. Hence they will have the best possible chance to form ties of friendship, which, as Karl Heinzen truthfully says, are most beautiful and most satisfactory when existing between a man and a woman. Quite often the first incitement to such friendship may be received in the intimate intercourse of a sexual co-enjoyment resulting from sensual love, but true friendship needs neither such a beginning nor any future sexual co-enjoyments to secure its constancy and

stability. Its first manifestation will be a profound interest in the weal and woe of the friend, an intimate, confidential exchange of ideas, of all the thoughts and experiences which agitate their minds (a grand enhancement of their joys, a soothing balm for all their sorrows, wherever they are sure of fervent sympathy)—and may lead them to many different co-operations and co-enjoyments, but certainly to none which do not appear mutually advantageous to them. They may wish to live nearer to each other; he may desire a home of his own, she may like house-keeping as a vocation or as part of it—and they establish a joint home and household. For this they will of course make an economic contract (not necessarily a *legal* one). Not to do so would appear as foolish, unjust and unworthy of them as if, because they loved each other, the man should employ the woman as a clerk in his business without any stipulation or agreement. They may also wish to enter into a family-relation with each other, which certainly requires a business contract. But by this time their confidence and sympathy may have become so strong that a joint purse or, in fact, a perfect communism in regard to material interests between them is the result. “Thy joy is my joy, thy woe is my woe!” This feeling may have been so strongly aroused in them after some years of intimate association of interests, that it brings a comradeship-contract for life. To the superficial observer this may seem to be a regular marriage, but there is a vast difference between the two con-

tracts. Some of their economic contracts may be exclusive, but they do not resign the liberty to enjoy the love of any human being, and there is no such thing as a sexual contract, nor any sexual living together. If both of our friends are sexually strong and healthy they may often win each other for sexual intercourse, but be they ever so different in their sexual strength and inclinations it will not destroy their union.

It is no marriage, but neither is it a "free union" as the "Free-Lovers" advise it.

I will now try to illustrate by an example the important difference between such a living together and a "free union":

Mr. A. and Mrs. B., both enthusiastic adherents of the theory of freedom, fall in love with each other, hence, without asking for the consent of state or society, they promptly agree to "live together as lovers." If you should ask a number of Free-Lovers about the real meaning of this latter phrase, you will receive some amusingly diverse answers. Some will readily admit that it means "to live together as husband and wife," but the majority will object to these obnoxious terms. After you have persistently rejected all the evasive answers which are generally given, you will find that it means neither more nor less than a "sexual living together," a mutual sexual possession, an exclusive sexual contract, which holds good so long as mutual love exists between the couple. After having arrived at a clear understanding of the intendment of the relation, I can now proceed with the story..

After the two have lived together for some time Mr. C., who is also a Free-Lover and an intimate friend of Mr. A., arrives in the city. Mr. A., who is very proud of his cosy home, promptly invites his friend to it and asks him to spend his leisure hours there. The guest begins to like the pretty young hostess, who of course tries her best to please the friend of her mate; his feelings towards her gradually become warmer until finally they culminate in a passionate love. And the woman?—well, six months of “living together” has somewhat “neutralized” the “sex-magnetism” between the mates (as always will be the case, even if the love be extremely fervent and passionate); Mr. A., who is conceited enough to feel perfectly safe in his love-relation and who is always fully satisfied sexually, has been somewhat indifferent and prosaic of late, his mind being filled with scientific problems or business speculations, while Mr. C., who has been “degagé” for some time, is full of impetuous virility and has plenty of leisure for attentive courtesies and ardent wooing. In brief, he soon perceives that he need not despair. The young woman becomes nervous, fidgety, wavering, and finally admits to herself that her love has now “changed to another!” What will be the result? Either a clandestine relation (in plain words, a mean and wily deception), which degrades the character and must sooner or later end in a tragedy, or Mrs. B. has the moral courage to inform Mr. A. in due time that she now “loves another” and hence must “live with another.” Theory demands that the rejected

lover swallow the bitter pill with noble magnanimity, that he promptly make room for the other man and part "as a friend"—but in nine cases out of ten a tragedy is the result. In the tenth case the sugar-coating of theory may enable the man to take the pill in quiet resignation, but it will not neutralize its poisonous contents; the "friendship" will always remain in an extremely delicate condition and, furthermore, the happiness of the woman will be diminished considerably by the consciousness of owing her new joy to a painful and humiliating sacrifice on the part of the man whom she formerly loved.

Tragedies resulting from "free unions" are certainly no rare occurrences, but I will gladly admit that they are not the rule (as might be expected). Sometimes the man feels very far from "safe" and finds means to keep all competitors at a safe distance; in some cases the enthusiasm for the exclusive-love-ideal furnishes an effective preventive; and in most cases the consciousness that a parting would mean a general disturbance of peace of mind, and derangement of business perhaps involving severe losses, is sufficient to cause the partners to guard themselves instinctively against any "dangerous" approaches of others and towards others. Furthermore it must be expected that Mr. C., being a Free-Lover, "knows himself" and knows something about human nature in general, and that he may be too conscientious or too good a friend to wilfully disturb a satisfactory union. Hence he may put on the brakes in due

time, *i. e.*, at the appearance of the first danger-signal. He will promptly place the conventional iceberg between himself and the woman and when he fears that even this may melt, he will simply stay away and will meet the next invitation of his friend with an evasive excuse. (So far as the "happy marriage of to-day" is concerned, I am fully convinced that the vaunted constancy in it is due far more to the fact that outsiders respect the "label" than to the will or inclination of the husband and wife. It is an easy matter for a woman to be true to her husband or mate when no other man dares or cares to approach her.)

But what do all these safeguards mean? As it is utterly impossible to draw any dividing line between the sensual and the spiritual in love, they mean that men and women constantly fortify and harden themselves against the grandest, the noblest, the most beautiful sentiments of the heart, while coldness and indifference are consistently encouraged and free scope is given to hatred and contempt. And it further means, that, if these free unions are not merely vulgar concubinages, in which, as the saying is, "the heart plays no part," they are imitations of Christian marriage, but lack the safety and security, the mutual confidence, arising from the firm resolution on both sides to "take each other for life," which, under favorable conditions, is very conducive to constancy in "quiet friendship."

Let us now suppose that the three persons just mentioned had all freed themselves from the pre-

valent superstitions in regard to love and sex-relations, and try to understand in what manner this would change the conditions and results. In the first place, neither the fact that Mr. A. and Mrs. B. fell in love with each other, nor that they established a joint home and household and entered into family relations, nor even the fact that they joined all their material interests, will then bind in any way their sexual freedom or their freedom in love in general. The one important guarantee which firmly establishes and secures this love liberty, is the fact that every free man and woman will always have at least one room as all his or her own, and that they will never think of giving up this right for any consideration. Hardly anything would appear more disgusting and degrading to a free woman than the idea of having a man forced by custom to sleep with her. If necessary she will gladly sacrifice the parlor or even the sitting-room for a room of her own, and even the most passionate love will not change her mind in this after she has once perceived the importance of the question. Furthermore, she will demand and frequently use the right to receive in this, her private apartment, any visitor of the opposite sex with whom she wishes to be alone.

Let us now try to imagine a situation, which would appear extremely dangerous under present conditions: The sitting-room in the joint home of Mr. A. and Mrs. B., the former at his desk, studying out some vexing problem, the latter engaged in a lively conversation with the guest, Mr. C. The

talk gradually becomes more animated, and the two engaged in it discover some chords in their natures which blend in beautiful harmony, thrilling their hearts with delight and waking the desire to enjoy this where they are secure from the intrusion of a third person. Without the least hesitation, as a matter of course, the woman invites the guest to accompany her to her room or private apartments. When there they are securely removed from any critical supervision or control by any other person or by society in general, and are absolutely free to enjoy whatever love or sympathy may exist between them. Whether this will culminate in sexual intercourse or not will probably be of far less importance to them than it appears to the lovers of to-day, and it certainly will not concern the outside world. As to Mr. A., the withdrawal of the two will have no further significance than that they do not wish to have their talk interfere with his thoughts or that they do not desire to be disturbed by him. It appears to him as the natural and commendable enjoyment of personal liberty, which he grants to all others as he unreservedly claims it for himself, which both he and Mrs. B. make use of quite frequently, which probably only yesterday led to a private interview of his partner with another man having no other purpose than a mere business-talk. But we might suppose a more critical position, we might imagine that Mr. A. had been an interested participant in the conversation, that he had plainly noticed that the desire for a private interview was caused by a passionate love

arising between Mrs. A. and Mr. C., but even this would not at all be disagreeable to him. He may have a very high opinion of himself, he may consider himself as good a man as there is in this world, but, being a free man he cannot be such a vain fool as to imagine that he possesses all those qualities to perfection which might be warmly appreciated by any particular woman of fair intelligence. If he is not altogether without common sense, he will know that there probably are thousands of men in this world who are far superior to him in some one or other quality, which would be a beautiful complement of some particular element of Mrs. B.'s nature, and if his alleged love for her is not a mere sham he will desire to have her enjoy the fullest and most perfect life as it is possible only by means of intimate social intercourse with many congenial beings. To say that that would endanger her love for him would be equivalent to admitting that he had no value whatever for her.

In order to test the most critical situation imaginable, we will now suppose that both men had at the same moment an equally strong wish for an "ideal enjoyment of love" with Mrs. B., or, to make it stronger still, passionately desired at the same moment sexual intercourse with her. (Every reader, who has fully understood the theory, will readily perceive that such a position would be an absurdity, almost an impossibility, where the three persons are really "free," but in order to leave no doubt, it is best to reckon with the extreme of possibility.) This is a critical sit-

uation indeed and of course means fight. Zoölogists inform us that they have observed many cases in the animal kingdom, where the female looks on with serene complaisance while two males are engaged in a bloody fight for her possession and graciously allows the proud victor to be her mate. To the lioness this may appear the most practical method of getting the “best,” but I am perfectly confident that the highest class of female beings will not demand such a bloody battle to measure values. Where no “possession” can possibly last any longer than a few hours, jealousy will mean no more than a constant striving *to show value*, and intelligent beings will not have to wound or kill to prove physical strength and skill, mental ability, or moral value. In conclusion, I must remark that what I have said about the jealousy of the youth applies equally well to this case. If there is any difference it is decidedly in favor of the latter, because here the parties can be more confident that economic slavery will not necessitate such distances in their abodes as to materially decrease their chances for the future.

An opponent says: “Suppose, however, that the natural inclinations of the woman should be decidedly monogamous?”

Would this mean that there is but one man in the world who could arouse her sexual desire? If so, then I would ask: How can a woman know this before she has seen all men and been wooed by all? Or does it mean that for a long time (say ten years after maturity) it has happened, that but one man

has been able to win her for sexual intercourse, and that consequently she gives up all hopes of ever being able to love any other man sexually? I will not dispute the possibility of such a case, but if it should happen we will stand a very poor chance of being informed of it, for no free woman will ever think of bragging about it or making it publicly known; for the simple reason that to publish the fact would mean either to expose a deplorable weakness in herself or to offer an insult to all men but one, which would make her social intercourse extremely unpleasant. And if the supposition should imply still more, *i. e.*, that a free woman might permanently consider one man her "God" or the ideal man, so that she could have no love for any other man and would have no love-desire except to become the "Goddess" of one man, then I would say that, in such a case, we should have sincere pity for the woman with the deranged mind, but would watch her rather closely to see whether her condition might not become dangerous to the lives of her associates.

In a free society a woman is at perfect liberty, of course, to have sexual intercourse with only one man, with a thousand different ones, or with none at all, but if monogamy is her ideal she is no free woman, and if she is foolish enough to make her ideal and her choice publicly known, that will prove to be a disastrous "label," which will render the free social intercourse almost valueless to her.

The real fact is, that the terms "monogamic," "polygamic," or "polyandric" are never applicable

to any free man or woman. The definite meaning of these expressions refers exclusively to the question as to how many human beings a person may or desires to possess for the purpose of satisfying his sexual impulse, to which a free individual can give no other answer than, None whatever.

The present unnatural conditions have of course caused many abnormalities in the physical constitutions of human beings. Some, although fairly healthy otherwise, may have but very little or even no sexual desire. Furthermore, ill-health makes many men and women for a long time unfit for the enjoyment of sexual pleasures. I trust that every intelligent reader will readily see by this time the immense advantages which a free society offers to such persons. They will have unlimited occasion to enjoy all the delights of love (which are so extremely varied and manifold) to the full extent of their capacity without ever being obliged to give more than they find pleasure in giving, while under existing conditions they are either barred from all real enjoyment of love with the opposite sex or are forced to exceedingly harmful prostitution for the sake of a valued "relation."

I wish to have it understood that, when I refer to the enjoyments of these persons, I do not by any means think only of the "merely spiritual" pleasures. Many a man and many a woman notices a particularly agreeable sensation caused by the physical proximity of a sympathetic person of the opposite sex, even when he or she has not the least inclination for sexual intercourse, or when

disease makes such an impossibility. As stated before, the influence of our sex-nature is not restricted to the time of pressing desire for the sex-act.

In my estimation, nothing could show more plainly the absurd inconsistency and the pernicious influence of the superstitious love-ideal than the cases of chronic ill-health of the man or the woman in a monogamic relation. I will try to illustrate this by a story from real life: A man and a woman, both young, healthy, and vigorous are drawn together by mutual sensual sympathy and spiritual love. They marry, enjoy sexual pleasures to their heart's content and are blessed with healthy children. After several years have passed the woman is taken ill and loses all desire for sexual intercourse. Her husband still needs it, hence she tortures herself for some time with quiet submission in spite of her revolting feelings. It is a sad and dreary "enjoyment," which blurs the blissful memories of former beautiful love-idyls with sickening disgust. Of course such unnatural actions aggravate her ailment and after a while she is obliged to stop all further sexual indulgence. The strong and robust man, who for years has been accustomed to regular sexual satisfaction, is suddenly forced to continence. The natural impulse torments him, but he loves his faithful life-companion and therefore he exerts himself to the utmost to suppress his feelings. He does not quite succeed in this, which causes moodiness and nervous irritation. Although he cannot quite control his thought, yet he can and will control his actions

and he remains a true friend and protector. But he cannot always stay with her; he must go out into the world to earn a living, and there he meets a pretty young woman, full of life and vigor, who casts at him a look of passionate longing, which promptly enflames his scarcely suppressed sensations. Seriously alarmed, he turns away—a firm resolve, and he goes back to “duty!” Energetic self-control, hard labor, and serious duties may enable him to banish the “dangerous” thoughts from his mind in the day-time, but at night a vivid dream brings back in supernatural glory the picture of the enticing siren. Unforeseen accidents, perhaps also the desire of the woman, cause several further meetings at critical moments and in “dangerous” situations. Finally, suppressed, violated nature has its revenge; to the troubled mind of the unhappy man everything in the world now appears indifferent except the possession of that woman, and quite often his wife seems to him a miserable, useless being, who is only a burden to himself and others. Persistently the thought will come back to him—If she were but dead, then the thought of the other would not be a sin! In a moment of passionate excitement this desire becomes so strong that it forces him to assist the wasting disease in completing more rapidly its work of destruction! Ah, horrible, beastly deed, to murder his own wife! Yes, horrible indeed, but the most horrible feature of it is that it was caused not by uncontrollable hatred, but by love! Furthermore, we must perceive that those men whom

you call the noblest are in the greatest danger of faltering in such a crisis. The weak coward and the cold and practical reckoner will not enter into such a struggle; their natural impulse will be subdued sufficiently at all times by so-called self-abuse to enable them to retain the prescribed cool indifference towards the most “dangerous” of all women, while the wily hypocrite will satisfy his desire in “clandestine relations” and with solemn oaths assure his anxious wife of his undying exclusive love!

Free-Lovers can justly claim that in their free unions such a deed from such a motive would be impossible, but they cannot claim that under like circumstances extreme misery would not be caused — by love! Consistency in the theory would of course justify the man in promptly severing his relation with the sick woman, saying good-bye as a friend, hiring a nurse if he could afford it, and “living with” the woman to whom his love has changed. One would think that in such a case the man, even if he were ever so much of an exclusive-love-enthusiast, would realize for once that his ideal is a horrible humbug, that a man can love two women truly and fervently. But, alas! that exclusive superstition seems to be too thoroughly instilled into them, and so we observe the strange phenomenon, that, instead of accepting plain facts, they generally resort to shallow sophistries for the sake of their cherished fetich. Some declare, “One love only is the true love, while the other is false.” (These generally say, You must remain with

woman No. 1.) Others philosophize thus. The feeling towards one of the women is "conjugal love," while the sympathy for the other is merely friendship. (These say, Go to woman No. 2.) In most cases, of course, theory will not be very apt to settle the question who shall have the man, but, no matter how it is decided, unhappiness is sure to follow, not only for one but for all parties interested, and certainly neither decision could be termed a satisfactory solution.

Free yourselves from superstition and you will find that all these awful difficulties are mere ghosts and phantoms which still scare poor mortals to death. They exist only in the imagination. In similar cases in a free society there positively would be no difficulty to solve. Even there meanness and hatred might still cause misery and unhappiness, but love—never. There living together, if it had any meaning whatever, would simply imply a practical economic arrangement for a joint home and household, and whether this excluded all but two or included the entire society would make no difference whatever in their freedom to love. And as to the comradeship-contracts, which mean constant and true friendship, even the moralists of to-day do not hold that they must necessarily be exclusive. Just imagine what a fine opinion future generations will have of the nineteenth century people who in their foolish superstition believed that one must "live with" a certain person in order to enjoy a particular kind of love, which they distinguished from other love by the "scientific" term "conjugal!"

It is impossible, of course, to imagine any group of free men and women where the circumstances would be in any way analogous to those I have just described. Suppose that one of two life-companions who had joined their interests in a home and family—say, for instance, the woman—becomes an invalid for a long time or for life. Then she would have a chance to appreciate and enjoy, more fully and profoundly than ever before, the great advantages of a comradeship-contract. His sense of honor, his regard for the appreciation and respect of all the men and women with whom he associates, would force her partner to be true to his comradeship-contract, and no “passion” would interfere. But no such consideration would be necessary for the security of the woman. It is love, fervent love, which is increased rather than diminished by any misfortune of the beloved, that will irresistibly impel her partner to remain a true friend under all circumstances. In regard to those persons to whom love means no more than the desire for sexual intercourse, I will say that there is not the slightest danger that they will ever be chosen for such a comradeship-contract or care to enter into such.

The great value and beauty of friendship between man and woman will become fully apparent after we cease to ask that it compete, in the choice of a “mate,” with the strong sexual impulse or (as it is so often the case in present society) with *morbid* sensuality, the “revenge of insulted nature.”

If during the time of the woman's ailing a passionate love should arise between her partner and another woman, this would mean that the man has most effective sympathy and assistance in performing his duties as a comrade towards one beloved, who may need tender care and watchful attendance. If some reader should still vaguely dread that the sick woman might be furiously jealous when she had reason to surmise that the two loving attendants occasionally had sexual intercourse with each other, then I would beg him or her to at least come to a clear understanding of what this would mean. It would mean that, although she claims to love the man, she begrudges him a pleasure for which she has no desire herself. To the free woman this would appear as the incarnation of meanness, for which no excuse could be found other than temporary mental derangement or—idiotic superstition! "Thy joy is my joy, thy woe is my woe;" that certainly expresses a beautiful sentiment, but it would be horribly parodied if interpreted thus: "Thou shalt not enjoy when I cannot enjoy;" or, worse still, "Thou must enjoy when I wish to enjoy!"

I trust that you, my reader, have by this time fully realized the value and import of the theory, that you have understood what it means to be free in love and to reject the old idea of possessing one human being of the opposite sex as your love-object. If you should still have an inward instinctive feeling which seems to say, "Impossible!", let me assure you that experience has proved that it

is possible, yes, that it is far from difficult for intelligent beings. Think twice before you speak and act, study again the arguments in this book, and if your reason tells you that they contain nothing but plain common sense and the logical conclusions drawn from the experiences of human society, then do not offer such a cowardly excuse as this, "Ah, but we cannot overcome our weaknesses by reason." If that could not be done there would have been no intellectual progress in the world. The man who formerly believed in ghosts and who has now been enlightened upon the subject will also perceive that a great deal of the old feeling of dread still remains. But if he has energy and moral courage he will again go over all the arguments of reason, satisfy himself that there can be no ghost, and then march into the haunted place when the clock strikes twelve. In his first experiment he may still require a great deal of energetic self-control to subdue the nervous excitement, it may appear to him as quite a bold deed, but after a few repetitions he will laugh at his childish fears.

Do not say "Impossible!" when there are no other obstacles in the way than the feelings born of rank superstition!

XV.

The Ideal Society.

IN my German book, I devoted much more space than I have here to the description of that union of a free man and woman which, so far as outward appearance is concerned, comes nearest to the conventional marriage of to-day. I wrote far more enthusiastically of the advantages of such a union, and proposed that the family contract be called the "marriage of the free," and that even the terms husband and wife be retained for the partners.

These were serious mistakes on my part, which caused a great deal of confusion in the minds of my readers as to the real scope of my theory. They were probably the main cause of the almost general misunderstanding of which I have complained.

As to the terminology, I must admit that my experience since the publication of the German treatise has completely reversed my opinion. A year ago I thought: "What is there in a name? If we can gain any advantage thereby, be it but to facilitate our necessary intercourse with the philistines, we will retain the old terms and give them new meanings." Hence, I proposed even to the new beginners that they accept the terms husband and

wife, in the family-relation. I argued somewhat like this: There are so many varied conceptions of the word marriage in the civilized world, almost every different creed giving it a peculiar meaning, why should we not accept the word to describe the union of a man and a woman, and apply and understand it in such a manner as to conform to our moral convictions? I forgot, however, that, although there is apparently a vast difference in the conception, the word does mean now in each and every case *sexual possession*, and the difference refers only to the question of how easily one can attain and get rid of such a possession, and how far the rights and privileges of ownership extend.

“Married,” “husband,” “wife”—these will always prove to be exceedingly annoying and perfectly useless “labels” for free men and women, and to wilfully place them upon ourselves is as absurd as to falsely mark a box “dynamite!”, when we have no desire to scare off anybody. Therefore, I now advise all “new beginners” to choose almost any other term than any of the above. As a general description of those we love, “friend” appears to me as the best and worthiest, it being sullied and degraded less than any other by a false morality; for the person with whom you associate your economic interests, the term “partner” is very appropriate, as it plainly indicates equality of rights and definitely stipulated terms in regard to the respective interests and the mutual obligations (which, under present conditions, is of great im-

portance, especially for women); — and if ye free women wish to have a special title for the father of your child, invent a new one, but do not say “husband.” It can hardly be expected that a man and woman who were legally married before they became “free,” will be anxious to go through that disgusting farce, divorce, (which is generally either quite difficult or quite expensive) simply to get rid of the obnoxious label, but they can gradually erase it by guarding against applying the obnoxious terms to themselves, and by objecting, whenever it appears expedient, to the use of the terms by others in addressing them or speaking of them.

The inexpediency and danger of the attempt to give an entirely new meaning to old words was brought home to me in a drastic and rather humiliating manner by an incident of last year. A learned gentleman, whom I must consider an intelligent man and a careful reader, was asked by an acquaintance to give him an idea of what my theory means. After some hesitation he said: “Well, it means that every husband should willingly and gladly allow his wife to have sexual intercourse with other men!” I was indignant, of course, when the story was reported to me, but I had to admit that it would be no easy matter to give the lie to this man. Intentionally or unintentionally, he used the terms, husband and wife, without explaining that where I use them in speaking of the free society they have an entirely different meaning from that usually attaching to them. Hence they naturally and on their face suggest the idea of sexual

possession. Now, where this is absolute exclusive mutual possession, as in a pure monogamic marriage, we can well imagine it to be associated with true, fervent love, while in the case of a voluntary sharing of the love-object with another or others we promptly become doubtful and ascribe this to indifference, and when it comes to occasionally loaning your possession to others, or, worse still, selling it or giving it away, love is out of the question, and it becomes simply disgusting to the un-free as well as to the free.

Suppose, however, that I had not given this man the slightest justification for using the terms in such a connection. His explanation would then read as follows: "The free man should willingly and gladly allow the free woman, with whom he has entered into a family-contract, to have sexual intercourse with others than himself." I do not think that my worthy critic would have cared to make a fool of himself by such a statement. How ludicrously silly it would be to speak of "allowing" where there is positively nothing to allow, where there cannot be the slightest reason for asking permission from any one! Then the man could have given no other answer than this, if he thought only of the sexual relations: "It means, No sexual "living together," no sexual contract, neither for a week nor for life, neither for love nor money. No sexual "belonging together" to extend beyond the time in which the lovers *naturally* belong together (exclusively, of course), which cannot possibly last any longer than a few hours!"

In regard to my enthusiasm for home and family, I must state that I have not changed my mind. Nevertheless, I have to concede that the expression of it without further comment was a serious mistake in tactics, as the resulting misunderstanding has plainly proved. An intelligent critic writes to me somewhat like this: "What a strange inconsistency! you bitterly oppose the monogamic sex-relation and at the same time speak with glowing enthusiasm of the monogamic family! Do you not perceive that the latter is also but an outgrowth of superstition? Can you not conceive a higher ideal for the comradeship of human beings than the Christian family?"

To avoid further misunderstanding, I must state that it was not the purpose of my German book and that neither is it the object of this treatise, to illustrate an ideal living together in an ideal society or a beautiful future for our grand-children, but to show the happiest condition which is possible at present; to investigate that we may determine how we shall *act now!*—therefore, I had to reckon with existing circumstances. There can be no question that in the present condition of human society the joint home and household, the comradeship-contract, and the family-relation with one person of the opposite sex offer a great advantage, yes, even a net increase in personal liberty, to many, and to ask that they should be sacrificed for the sake of a principle must always prove fatal to the cause.

It may be expedient, however, to always keep

in view an ideal which we desire to reach, in order to be sure that our steps are taken in the right direction. My ideal is: *Liberte, Fraternite, Egalite*—"The Brotherhood of Man"—"Human society one great family"—but if you should claim that therefore I must consider it my *duty* to greet every man as my brother, every woman as my sister, either in the world at large or in a separated society, that to me would appear as absurd as the *command* from above: "Love thy neighbor as thyself!"

I could not imagine a beautiful human society without a general love and sympathy between all its members, but I know that this condition can never be reached by any practical agreement, "sense of duty," sacrifice for principle, nor by the most complete economic communism. Remove, however, the icy barriers which superstition has erected and we will constantly get nearer to the ideal, universal love for humankind—we will soon have a high degree of economic communism, resulting, not from enslaving dogmas or laws, but from the spontaneous desire of free individuals.

So long as "the bosom of humanity is such a cold place to rest upon" (as Mrs. Lillie D. White puts it), many men and women will long for a home, a family of their own, as "a safe refuge and peaceful resting place from the cold and indifferent world," and it is of the utmost importance to show them that they can have this security and still retain their freedom in love. The free and intimate social intercourse resulting from sex freedom will

soon bring them all nearer to each other, the indifference and coldness will give way to a friendly interest in the welfare of the neighbor, gradually the feeling of mutual confidence and security will increase until finally they perceive that it is no longer necessary to enter into a binding contract with one human being in order to secure fervent sympathy with all your joys and sorrows and willing aid in need and distress—that the “bosom of humanity” has become a safer and better resting-place than any one man or woman can guarantee. As this conviction grows stronger the originally small and rigid boundary lines of the small family circle will gradually expand and finally embrace the entire human society.

In other words—In a free society the so-called monogamic family relation (which at present must appear necessary) will gradually disappear as it lessens in value. And every such diminution will indicate that we have come nearer to the ideal society, which I would thus describe:

A society where every child is inspired by its educators with a fervent appreciation of the value which every member of the large human family has for the whole as well as for each individual—where every youth and maiden entering into the society of free and responsible individuals will be buoyed by the hopeful and joyous expectation that, by duly showing and exercising the tenderest and strongest qualities of their natures, their impetuous longing will readily attract the reciprocal feeling in congenial friends—where the life of every man

and woman is jeweled with many “ideal enjoyments of love,” in which all the world is forgotten for one of its inhabitants—and, last but not least, where his material welfare is ever remembered, where profound interest in his weal and woe and prompt help in need is permanently secured for every human being by a comradeship-contract with the entire society, a contract which is absolutely voluntary, but which is enforced more surely than by the most stringent laws, by that sentiment which enables every member to say with truthful fervor to all humanity: “Thy joy is my joy, thy woe is my woe. Oh, beautiful world, I love thee!”



XVI.

The Number of Children in a Free Society.

SOME of my critics have expressed the fear that absolute sexual freedom would result in a large number of undesired and unprovided-for children, and for the following reasons:

1. No preventive check being absolutely safe.
2. Sensual passion often causing lovers to forget all about the preventives or to use them carelessly and indifferently.

I claim that these fears are perfectly groundless and that the reasons stated apply only to the "secret sins" of conventional society. There are several good preventive checks known now, which may be called practically safe, the use of which is extremely simple and unembarrassing, and these will be greatly improved in a very short time in a free society. Every free man and woman will be constantly "prepared," even when there is no thought of sexual intercourse. In every bed-room the required articles will belong as self-evidently to

the toilet outfit as the comb and brush. Furthermore, that furious passion caused by morbid sensuality, which is liable to perfectly derange the mind, will not appear in a free society. For these reasons I claim that chance-children will be the extremely rare exceptions.

Others again are of the opinion that, if all women were free individuals and had a chance to fully enjoy sensual love at any time without thereby incurring maternal duties, the human race would soon die out. Probably nothing better could happen for the women economically than that all men should become seriously alarmed, but this is not very liable to happen. Women have given us too many unmistakable proofs of their courage in this respect. Think of the many cases on record in which women voluntarily suffered painful, yes, even dangerous operations for no other purpose than to be able to conceive!

“But,” the critic says, “in these cases they did so simply to please a man!”

And so will free women bear children in many, perhaps even in the majority of cases, simply to please a man, but in each and every case they will ask that the man please them in return.

Women will do a great deal to please men and men will do a great deal to please women, especially when they love without possessing!

Furthermore, we must not forget that the “natural inclination” of a healthy woman decidedly favors maternity.

In regard to the so-called population-question,

i. e., whether it would be better for human society for population to diminish, to increase gradually, or to remain stationary, I will say that this problem is not nearly so important as most people seem to regard it. The one and only essential point is that every child come to the proper place—be well conceived and well cared for ever after—and I claim that freedom in love and the preventive check will bring about this condition.

If there should ever be reason to fear that the human race might die out, this would result in such an increased valuation and appreciation of the child-bearing woman that it would promptly bring forth many thousands of volunteers for the noble vocation of perpetuating the race.

A very important factor which should be considered in this connection, is the condition of the woman during the pregnancy, as that condition is to-day and as it would be in a free society. While we have good reason to expect that to many a woman in a free society this will appear a particularly pleasurable time, there is hardly a woman to-day who does not consider pregnancy a humiliating ordeal, even if she is healthy and desires the child. Our present-day prospective mother is ashamed of herself! She tries to conceal her condition as long as she can. When she cannot do so any more, she feels obliged to withdraw as much as possible from the outside world, because the changed appearance of her body suggests so strongly the immoral thought of that nasty, impure act, the sex-association! She may crave a

child of her own, she may be glad of her condition, but she cannot speak freely and openly about it with joyful pride as would be so natural. On the contrary, any allusion to the coming baby will bring the blush of shame to her cheeks! For weeks and months she is excluded from many pleasant social gatherings, which she could enjoy as much as ever—and if in some cases the healthy natural feeling is too strong to submit to the tyranny of custom, her own husband is very liable to forbid her going out, because she looks so ugly! Really, it ought to bring the blush of shame to *our* cheeks to think that we have the audacity to call ourselves a civilized nation!

Nothing can show more plainly the horrible vulgarity and meanness of our present “morals” than the way in which human beings, and especially our young people, look upon and treat pregnancy. Think of the humiliating position of the pregnant mother towards her son of eight years. By some chance the boy has heard of an expected addition to the family. He asks his mother about it. She is embarrassed, tries to evade the question, and finally tells him a little story about an angel bringing the babies from heaven, the doctor fishing them out of the pond, or the like. As the subject does not interest him very deeply, the boy is perfectly satisfied with any definite answer—until in a certain twilight hour behind the wood-pile a smart street-urchin, proud of his wisdom, initiates him into a number of terrible secrets: Whence the babies come! what horribly nasty things these

grown folks do on the sly, and finally what his own mother must have done lately!

The latter he can hardly believe. Reaching home, he promptly questions her about it, and he plainly notices that she is shocked, perplexed. *She blushes*, she is ashamed of herself!—Ah, it is true! he has caught her! How ridiculous it appears to him when she finally tells him that a little boy ought not to ask such questions or speak or think about such things. With an ironical, self-satisfied smile he turns away. “He is no baby any more whom they can fool with silly ghost stories! He has now got on to the tricks of the grown people!”—It is the first fatal step towards contempt of the world, contempt of his mother, and that contempt it will be hard to eradicate.

I will now show you another picture to contrast with this: A pregnant mother calls her son of eight years to her side. With childish impetuosity he jumps upon her, but with a proud and happy smile she wards him off and tells him that from now on he must handle her more tenderly and carefully for the sake of a tiny little baby which she carries within herself. She then explains to him how it originated, how the wee little thing found a warm nest prepared for its reception in her body, where she must now take good care of it and nourish it from her own blood, so that it will grow and grow until it becomes too large and too lively to be satisfied with its narrow resting-place, when she will, with much pain, bring it forth to the world, so that they all can enjoy the baby. And she fur-

ther shows him how even after that she must keep on nourishing it from her body, and she concludes with the remark that her big boy also came thus from his mamma, has grown from a small kernel into a big fellow, as yonder tree has grown from a little acorn into a towering oak. Try to imagine now that this boy's thoughts have not been sullied by the dirt which "moral" society so persistently throws upon this subject. Will the truth not appear far nobler, far more beautiful to him, than the prettiest fairy-tale which you could invent about the coming baby? What other thoughts and feelings could it arouse in his mind than a deep respect and a fervent love for his dear, courageous mamma, who has done so much for him, and must yet suffer so much more in order to give him a little play-mate? And is it not self-evident that it will naturally have such an effect upon even the "toughest" fellow, that, whenever he sees another woman in such a condition, he will become conscious of a spontaneous feeling of deep respect for the important function and a warm appreciation of the courageous woman?

But it is not only the boy of eight years for whom we demand a transition from the lowest and meanest conceptions to noble sentiments—almost all our men, yes, even the women themselves, are sorely in need of such a process of purification.

Let us free ourselves from a false and superstitious "morality;" then the state of pregnancy will bring to women no humiliations, no painful embarrassments, but instead a more attentive

care, a more gentle and affectionate treatment, and induce a higher appreciation of their value; then many a man may become conscious of the fact that we were hardly justified in calling women the "weaker sex!"

XVII.

Undesired Children.

SOME time ago a man suggested this practical objection to sex-freedom: "You will have to admit that none of the preventive checks are positively safe. What will become of the happiness of two life-companions who have entered into family-relations with each other, if the woman conceives from another, say a stranger, who has aroused her sensual passion for a few hours?"

I have shown in the previous chapter that this is not at all likely to happen. It would be far less probable than that one of them should be maimed in a railroad accident, and I hope that no reader will say that because of the latter possibility they should never travel on a railway train. Let us suppose, however, for the sake of the argument, that the conception has taken place. In the first place, we have good reason to expect that even in this case maternity will bring to the woman far more joy and satisfaction, more honor and esteem and less humiliation than the average undesired conception from the legal husband in the marriage of to-day. But how about her friend and partner?

How will he look at the matter? That will depend upon how favorable or unfavorable he considers the influence of the other man in procreation.

You understand, of course, that in a free society such impregnation by another man could not possibly bring any disgrace, dishonor, or humiliation to the partner. As I will explain hereafter, it would often be desired and agreed upon voluntarily. If, however, the partner considers himself a good agent for procreation, he will certainly not desire such a thing. He may then think it quite a misfortune, but he will of course share it faithfully with his friend. That would be a queer friendship indeed which would not be strengthened rather than weakened by this or any other misfortune, it would not be valuable enough to arouse grief at its loss.

Remember, furthermore, that, whatever this impregnation may mean otherwise, it is not the result of dull and indifferent submission to "marital duty," but of an act of sexual love and hence we may well expect that the issue will be a strong and healthy child.

The direction given to all the propensities of the child at the instant of procreation is indeed of great importance, but the influence of subsequent treatment, the quality of the nutrition and education, is equally if not more powerful. Those people who doubt this and speak of the ever-unchangeable "nature" of a child, generally do not think of the fact that education begins immediately after conception. For the first nine months it is indirect, of course, but it is none the less effective. It is a

well established fact (to which apparently people paid more intelligent attention 2000 years ago than they do now), that the so-called spiritual as well as the physical life of the pregnant woman is of the utmost importance to the child, that all her thoughts and sensations during this time effect the physical and mental development of the new being. Who, excepting the mother, could have a greater influence in this respect than the partner and life-companion of the latter? By taking care of the mother and the child—or, more accurately—by constantly and faithfully assisting in the sustentation and education of the new being from the beginning of its existence, the man earns his share in the child. It is by this, and by this alone, that a man in a free society can become the father of a child.

You might ask me perhaps whether the couple would not dread the interference of the procreator. Certainly not. If he should take a well-meaning interest in the child, this might be of great benefit to the latter and to the parents. If, however, they should not consider this influence desirable—well, then they would simply keep him at a distance or probably might not inform him of the fact at all that he was the cause of the addition to the family. But suppose he should claim the child as “his own?” Well, then, he will simply make a fool of himself. Ridiculous presumption, to claim rights and privileges in a child just because in pursuit of pleasure and the satisfaction of his natural desire he has given the incentive to its formation! In consider-

ation of the fact that the physical and mental development of the new being is conditioned to a great extent by the character or quality of this incentive, it would certainly appear but natural that the man should take a warm interest in the child procreated by him — but not a single valid reason could be found why this should give him any rightful claim.

Remember, dear reader, we are Freethinkers and have rejected Christian marriage, hence are obliged to do our own thinking in regard to the question of rights in children. In trying to settle the question we find that it is settled already. As we want woman to be a free and independent being, we certainly cannot admit that for a certain time a part of her body should be owned by another. Therefore, for the first nine months of its existence the child is unquestionably the absolute property of the mother, and I cannot see any reason why this should be changed by the fact that she separates it from her body. Hence it is plain, that the only original absolute owner of the child is the mother, and that there are but two ways for a man to hold a child as “his own,” viz., either by *possessing* the mother or bargaining with the free woman for a share in her issue. I prefer the latter, and feeling confident that we men will always have many valuable things to offer to women, I believe that mutually satisfactory agreements will easily be effected.

It is self-evident, of course, that in a free society that man would be called the father of a child upon

whom the mother had bestowed a half-interest in it, irrespective of whether he was or was not its procreator. This is perfectly consistent with the present interpretation of the word, but we to-day also call a man a father for no other reason than that he is the procreator of a child. This latter extension of the meaning we should reject, as it is very misleading and confusing and degrades a word which contains a great deal of beautiful sentiment.

I will now explain why in many cases the fact that the father and the procreator are different persons will be the result of voluntary resolution. There are many men who know that they are subject to some serious hereditary disease or that for other reasons they are unfit for healthy procreation, but who have desire for sexual intercourse, love children, are excellently qualified for supporting and educating them, and long for a home and family. A large number of these marry, beget a number of sickly children that are born but to suffer and die after a short struggle—and who accept it all in stupid patience as the “will of God.” Others are too intelligent and conscientious to do this and go through life lonely and disconsolate without opportunity to utilize their noblest qualities. And yet it would be such a simple matter for all these to enjoy life to the full extent of their capacity, to become useful members of human society, thus helping us improve this world—while now they are furnishing us nothing but sad and dreary pictures of human mal-adaptation. No prohibitory laws would be necessary, as there is no

woman in the world who would find any pleasure in the thought of bringing forth a diseased child—enlightenment, liberation from superstition, is all that is needed.

A free man will examine and criticize himself before he procreates. If he finds that he is not well adapted for the purpose (possibly it may be sufficient that he considers others better adapted), he will let another man *cause* (not *make*, as it is falsely termed sometimes) the children which will be his own. As explained before, he will then utilize all such qualities of his in the development of the child as he considers good and useful and in this way may have a healthy and happy family.

The case may appear somewhat more difficult for women, but you may rest assured that any woman will prefer to resign the joys of maternity rather than to bear a child with the expectation that it will be infected with a serious disease of her own. This will not bar her from the enjoyment of sexual intercourse nor from the most intimate union of friendship with a man. Instead of bearing a child herself, she will adopt the issue of another woman, to whom it would be a great burden, but she will not wait until this is born, but accept it as soon as possible after conception. She will not simply buy the child, but, as in the case of a man, will try to secure for herself, even before its birth, a certain moral claim to the child by the most tender and attentive solicitude for the mother during pregnancy, lactation, and the first period of maternity. I doubt very much, of course, that

she will have a chance to make such an arrangement with any “free” woman, but, alas, for a long time to come there will still be many unfortunate “non-free” women, for whom such adoption would indeed be a great blessing, all the more because the “property right” in children will not mean an exclusive right to love them, but simply the exclusive control of their maintenance and education during the time of their dependence.

I should not be surprised if many readers will think, in reading this chapter, that I am “going rather far,” and “expecting a little too much” of free men and women, but I claim that these conditions are no more than the inevitable results of liberation from superstition. The only maxim of the free man is this: “Know thyself, and then use all your faculties to the best of your understanding for *your own* happiness, for the most satisfactory enjoyment of all the good things which this world has to offer!”—This may sound abominably egoistic to many readers, but do not be frightened; any sane person will soon perceive that for his own happiness he needs the happiness of many others, yes, that it is dependent even to quite an extent upon the happiness of all humanity!

XVIII.

Licentiousness.

IN this chapter I will state a few reasons why sexual freedom will not only rescue us from the evils of continence, but will free us effectively from the evils of licentiousness, that is, from physically and mentally degrading excess in sexual pleasures.

We guard against such excess by removing its causes, which are mainly these:

1. Morbid desires caused by unnatural restraint.

2. The charm of the unknown; the temptation of the "forbidden fruit."

3. The neglect of the subject of sexuality in education.

4. The fact that sexual intercourse is considered the inevitable result, the ultimatum of any true love between a man and a woman.

5. The possession of a human being for the purpose of sexual service, be it through legal or moral laws, a commercial bargain or a declaration of love, be it "limited" or for life.

6. The lack of any sweet poetic flavor in the sex-intercourse of "civilized" society—the general joylessness.

I believe it will require no further argument to enable any reader to see these points. None of them will be disputed, excepting probably the last named, to which I will devote some more attention.

The famous German philosopher, Fr. Nietzsche, says: "The mother of licentiousness is not joy, but joylessness." Everywhere you will see this statement verified. The most extreme excess of which we hear occurs in so-called "self-abuse" (every specialist in sexual diseases will testify to this). It is a constant craving for pleasure and joy without ever feeling the sweet and serene sensation of real satisfaction; it is always only an exhaustion without contentment. The nearer to this any other sex-act comes in "joylessness," the more it will incite to excess, leading to the desire to make up by quantity for the deficiency in quality. Hence we hear of the most unnatural and most harmful artificial means which are used in such "joyless" cases in order to gain the capacity for this "quantity," that is, to cause artificially the necessary excitation.

For the free man, who must choose and be chosen for each and every one of his sex-acts, each association will be a beautiful love-idyl full of genuine physical and spiritual joy, resulting in a sweet and restful sensation of satisfaction which may well and pleasantly occupy his thoughts for a long time. There is no danger that he will ever become licentious!

XIX.

The Sense of Shame.

SOME time ago, I tried to give to a man, who was very much interested in the subject, an idea of life in a free society. Nothing seemed to shock him so terribly as the thought that there "the people would lose all sense of shame and might even go so far as to enjoy the sex-act in public!"

I of course laughed at him, and answered that even the most vulgar of our free men and women would be extremely careful not to have him or any other of his ilk as a witness to their love-acts, not because they were ashamed of their affectional demonstrations, but because the disgusting sight of a man with such low and vulgar ideas would seriously interfere with their pleasure.

He had no more to say. I thought at the time that he was a rare exception, but, alas, I have since heard so many similar expressions from pseudo-radicals, that it seems necessary to argue the question.

For many the expression, "sense of shame," seems to have no other meaning than that you are thoroughly ashamed of your sex-nature, that you

should blush at the slightest allusion to it, and faint when it is spoken of in plain terms. To these we can say without further discussion, that we of course expect that in the free society we shall completely eradicate this absurd and silly feeling.

However, the true interpretation of the term is this: The feeling of reluctance and aversion to expose, to openly show or express anything, which is considered odious, ugly, repulsive, or non-æsthetic.

For many centuries the most fanatical and terribly persistent exertions have been made to force humankind to look upon everything which is sensual, everything which may incite to sexual desire, as low, mean, ugly, and vulgar—and with equal persistency human nature has constantly opposed this view. This has necessarily caused a terrible confusion in men's conception of the beautiful, so that very soon almost all human beings became more or less shameless, and with the result that now we hardly expect any true sense of shame anywhere except, possibly, in "sweet sixteen!"

We cannot expect to have a somewhat general uniformity in the judging of ugliness and beauty until these awful inconsistencies and contradictions are removed. After we have attained this we will find a genuine, noble sense of shame in all civilized human beings, and more of it in the old and wise "man of the world" than in the young woman. It will naturally be most sensitive in regard to the intimacies of love- and sex-life.

It would be a mistake to assume that present society is shameless because it finds a particular

pleasure in voluntarily exposing the odious — in most cases this is simply the result of a misunderstanding of the taste of the audience. Such errors must be expected to-day. Everywhere we have occasion to notice that one part of society regards something as noble and beautiful which appears to the other part odious and repulsive; again and again we see men furiously condemn as low, mean, and ugly, that which in secrecy gives them great pleasure. It is no wonder, therefore, that many persons, who make these observations without realizing the “why,” lose all “good taste,” take every sign of disgust for a hypocritical disguise—and hence become shameless out of mere ignorance.

These dangers will disappear in a free society. There real ugliness will receive no “mysterious” charm through its relation to the sexual, no real beauty will be condemned because it is “sensual.” A woman who has the perfect figure of a Venus may show herself anywhere at any time in complete nudity and every free human being will feel nothing but the genuine joy of contemplating real beauty. How absurd it seems to call it shameless to show us something beautiful!

I doubt, of course, whether such a public exposition may ever be expected. Even a Venus may consider it far more advantageous to give the full view of her bodily charms only in the most favorable light, on the most auspicious occasion, where she is sure of passionate appreciation. But this has no bearing upon the question before us, and we can leave that to the woman herself. Certain it

is, that any woman who is not convinced of the ideal beauty of her so-called “secret charms” will prefer to modestly cover them and never to drop the last vesture except when alone or with the passionately enamored lover—being well aware that in the transforming light of sensual passion many features may appear wonderfully beautiful which would fail deplorably under the critical eyes of the cool observer; yes, which might even appear decidedly ugly to the dispassionate beholder.

No respectful, humane, and beautiful presentation in art, in literature, or in conversation, of the sexual relations, even if ever so clear and distinct, will then be condemned. On the contrary, real beauty will be appreciated in this even more than in any other field. To treat it, however, with such sneering contempt as is customary to-day, to find satisfaction in villifying sensual love and dragging it through the mire, will promptly be denounced by every free man and woman as the superlative of shamelessness.

Would the sex-act ever be seen in public in a free society? As there would be neither a legal nor a moral law against it, and as it in itself would not appear mean or ugly to any free being, it might seem possible. But so long as there is the least danger that a single *unfree* witness might make his customary *shameless* remarks about it, it certainly would not occur. But there are many other reasons which would preclude such action, even in the freest society. I have already intimated one of them in the foregoing.

The physical love-union of a Venus and an Adonis would be looked upon by old and young, by the weak and the strong, as a noble and beautiful spectacle, but there is but little chance of any other public presentation of it except in the productions of art.

For reviewing and comparing and choosing, for the ever charming wooing and winning of sexual love, they may desire the jovial company of many—but for the most intimate physical union every loving couple will prefer (even a thousand years hence) to withdraw from the critical eyes of all observers to a quiet and cosy retreat—not because of a “sense of shame”—but because a third person could not possibly share their feelings and would therefore bring a marrying discord into their beautiful harmony.

XX.

Obscenity.

EVERY person having fairly good sense must admit that the strong and ineradicable natural impulse, the longing for sexual pleasures, must naturally make conversation and literature on that subject particularly interesting, must create a desire to read and talk about sensual subjects. Tyrannical prohibition has the tendency to strengthen the desire and in many cases changes the vague longing into a morbid craving. Where are the chances to satisfy this craving? Whenever a beautiful love-relation or a happy marriage is described not a word is mentioned about the sexual—"oh, no, that would make it obscene!" But when a mean and vulgar action or a horrible crime is made public, then the sexual aspect is generally pictured out in detail—as the most shocking part of all of course! It is this "most shocking part," however, which causes the agreeable titillation, which gives the "piquant flavor" to the story. Wherever we find this "piquancy" it is associated with vulgarity, odiousness, meanness, and depravity, but one gets used to these!—and finally they

may even have an independent charm of themselves.

Think of the talks of your chaste and respectable housewives! what a great pleasure they find in discussing "scandal" and "criminal relations" (oh, what a "piquant" phrase!). Must we suppose that they all have such low and depraved characters that they find pleasure in "running down" other people? Certainly not — at least, it is not their original, natural inclination. They also cannot resist the tempting charm of "piquancy." They are well aware of this, they are ashamed of it, and hence consider it quite necessary in order to prove their own "purity" and "innocence," to furiously denounce the "terrible immorality" of others, never to speak of any "illicit love" without throwing an extra heap of dirt upon sexuality in general. In the anxious attempt to prove their own "morality," they become grossly vulgar and obscene.

Listen to the chat of the jolly traveling-men, trying to while away the ennui of waiting for the next train by telling jokes unfit for feminine ears. One of them tells a pretty story about the trials and adventures of two passionate lovers, in which some queer accidents cause ludicrous mistakes and comical complications—a story which would be accepted by the most sensitive free man or woman with a hearty laugh. Another joke follows which is but a shameless derision of sexual intercourse—the sex-act pictured being the meanest and filthiest imaginable and the point of the joke requiring the description of the basest criminal actions. Both

jokes are promptly declared exceedingly “smutty,” and both cause great merriment. And if the first gentleman has gone a little farther in enumerating the details of the affair, or if he has been rather enthusiastic in describing the so-called “secret charms” of the woman in the case, then his joke will of course be called the “smuttiest” of the two! An excellent object lesson indeed in which to study the “good taste,” the “sensitive æsthetic feeling,” of our “civilized nation” as contrasted to the coarse and vulgar conceptions of the cannibals!

The confusion and contradiction resulting from a false morality opposing strong natural inclinations has not only killed all true and noble sense of shame, but it constantly exerts a general corrupting influence upon the character of young and old.

Observe the youth in his secret thoughts, in his secret doings. The powerful impulse is fully developed, but he has no clear understanding of its essential meaning. He dare not speak of it to his parents or to any loved one; the moral books which they give to him do not contain a word about it—but he does know a certain society (which, in fact, he thoroughly despises), where he can hear much about it, there is plenty of reading matter (which heretofore appeared odious and repulsive to him) in which sex-relations are referred to very plainly. What he is looking for is associated everywhere with vulgarity and depravity, he is forced to scrape it out of the dirt, but the many mysterious

allusions increase the craving—and as to the dirt—one gets used to that after a while!

Why do our young men care so much for the “Police Gazette?” Have they all a natural inclination for vice and crime, that they should have such a longing to read about it? No, but every one of the horrible pictures in this detestable publication is closely connected with and plainly alludes to sexual action. That is what the boys are looking for. The criminal part makes them shudder with horror in the beginning, but that one secret longing forces them again and again to read those flamboyant descriptions of seduction, rape, and perversity resulting in beastly fights and murder—until they have become thoroughly accustomed to the thought of vulgarity, depravity, and crime, until finally these thoughts have come to have a “piquant charm” in themselves.

I wonder if some of my readers will exclaim, “Let us prohibit the ‘Police Gazette!’ ”

No!—let us stop these fatal fooleries! It is prohibition which has caused all of the misery and degradation! Give us freedom from superstition, give our young men a chance to speak freely and openly about their natural impulses to the men and women who are nearest and dearest to them—let the most gifted poets, the most humane authors, initiate him, without reserve, without mystic paraphrases, into the knowledge of sexual love and its noblest and healthiest gratification—then the “Police Gazette” can do us no more harm and will soon die from want of subscribers.

Give us liberty! then we will soon be delivered from that vast amount of filthy and obscene literature which corrupts our youth to-day—delivered not by sneaking spies *a la* Comstock, but by the book-dealers themselves, who will promptly burn the stuff, for which they will find no more buyers, except probably a few cranky collectors of curiosities, who may want to save some specimens as gloomy mementos of a sad and dreary age of tyranny and superstition!

XXI.

Prostitution.

PROSTITUTION! — the mere mention of this word is sufficient to cause a shudder of horror in “sweet innocence!”—What is it that makes prostitution so horrible?

Is it that women use their charms and abilities for making money, offering to men a pleasure which they need and desire? No, for every actress, every public singer, does the same.

Is it that they often ruin their health thereby? That makes the sacrifice for men so much the greater, and would be a reason for respect, or at least for pity, never for contempt.

Is it that they also endanger the health of men? The ignorance and carelessness of men are mostly to blame for this, and, furthermore, we must not forget that they also do considerable to benefit the health of men.

Is it that they live in such odious places and associate with such mean and depraved men? That is certainly not their free choice; we have forced them thither by our scorn and contempt, by our persecutions—But

That they submit without affection, that they misuse a beautiful gift of nature (which would procure for them many an ideal enjoyment of love) and degrade it to a mere commercial factor—yes, that might be a valid reason for your contempt, provided, however, that you yourselves, dear ladies, are sure you have never misused the gift, that you have always with it brought joy and happiness to yourselves and others, without being influenced in its use by gold or other economic considerations. Can you say that much for yourselves? No! Well, so long as you are silly and ignorant enough to believe that you can do nothing better with this truly beautiful natural impulse than to make the most sickening and unnatural exertions to suppress it until you get a chance to submit for life to one man as a mere sexual slave, in which unions the “economic consideration” is very seldom forgotten, and where even in the most favorable cases a few love-embraces are promptly followed by thousands of vulgar prostitutions in your so-called marriage-bed—in short, so long as you cannot make a better showing of your use of the gift, you are not justified in looking down upon any woman because of the mere fact that she temporarily submits to a sexual embrace for pecuniary recompense. Your average action is no less a “devoting of noble faculties to low and despicable purposes,” hence no less a prostitution, than hers, and the only difference consists in the fact that, while you receive the praise and commendation of society and therefore can easily retain your dignity and self-

esteem, the so-called prostitute is promptly cast out like a disgusting leper and must (unless she is exceptionally intelligent), soon lose her self-respect and with it many good qualities, or must become an enraged fiend, of whom it is absurd to expect any noble action toward the immense crowds of her powerful enemies, who have treated her in such a dastardly ignoble, shameless manner. What has she done? Seeing that so many men are craving for a pleasure which she is willing to give, being sorely in need of the metal, without which even "respectability" is of but little account in our "civilized country," she bestows the pleasure and receives in return the voluntarily offered reward. She has harmed no one, she has interfered with no rights of her fellow beings, but, like a thousand Furies, enraged "society" rushes upon her, lashing her with scorn and contempt, torturing her with brutal physical force. And if in this unjust and unequal combat the poor defenseless creature begins to spit and scratch and bite, the "respectable" woman of fashionable society exclaims with cheap dignity from her safe and exalted position, "See the miserably vulgar wretch! How can a woman become so depraved as to lose all sense of decorum and propriety?"

The gloomy pictures of degeneracy and vulgarity which we observe to-day in the train of "prostitution" may well cause us a shudder of horror, but after we have freed ourselves from superstitious fanaticism, we will see that it is not the fact of prostitution in itself which causes all this misery

—that it is but the natural result of our derision and contempt, of our tyrannical persecutions! What I said about prohibition in conversation and literature on sexual subjects, is equally true of prohibition in sexual action, viz.:

That a healthy young man, in whom the impulse is fully developed, should like to speak and read about sexual subjects is not at all dreadful—it is simply natural—but that you force him to become accustomed to dirt in order to satisfy the desire,—that is indeed dreadful, and if by further interdiction and a mediæval censorship you drive him into the most secret by-ways, it may justly be termed the superlative of stupidity!

That the young man should long for the gratification of his sexual impulse is not dreadful, it is simply natural—but that you force him to associate with vulgarity and depravity in order to obtain what he requires, that is indeed dreadful, and if your fanaticism should rob him of this last chance and drive him to the most secret gratification, then, that may also be called the superlative of stupidity!

Thousands of sermons have been preached on that dreadful vice, prostitution, thousands of voluminous books have been written about it; they all give us terribly realistic illustrations of how so many of our best young men are led into vice and crime by this evil, how it brings misery and disease into many of our happiest families—and, alas! they can hardly exaggerate in this. for the conditions are indeed horrible! But what do

all these would-be reformers offer as a remedy for this evil? More stringent laws, more tyranny, more persecution, severer judgment, severer punishment, police control, police regulation and registration, public branding! Ah, "what fools these mortals be!"—they all seem to desire to increase just that which is the one and only cause of all this misery! When I perceive this blind, fanatic fury, it makes me think that all the depravity in human nature is but the result of contempt and persecution by those persons who consider themselves abler, worthier creatures and hence entitled to sit in judgment over their fellow-beings. But it arouses still other thoughts. Why is it that this terrible treatment has not made these ostracized women far worse than they really are? How can we explain it that we can still find in them many good and amiable qualities, that they have not all become fiendish criminals through the so fundamental natural feelings of resentment and self-defense? That they are no worse might lead one to suppose that the most tender-hearted and good-natured of women choose this vocation. But, no, there is another explanation: They do not believe in the sincerity of our manifestations of disgust and contempt. They see so much miserable hypocrisy all around them that they soon lose the last vestige of faith in the nobility of human nature. There is not a fanatic Christian in the world who is more thoroughly convinced that "we are all miserably depraved sinners," than the average prostitute. With a doubting, ironical smile she will

think of the manifestations of disgust with which the "respectable" woman turns away from her, and a scornful laugh would greet any man who should boast of his "purity" (provided, of course, that she sees no advantage in playing the part of a repentant sinner for a while). The conviction that we are not justified in our judgment because we are equal sinners hardens these women against our poisonous arrows of scorn and derision. It is their thorough contempt for humanity in general which keeps them from becoming vindictive criminals, but it is this, together with the resulting loss of self-respect, which also finally causes a general moral depravity in nearly all of them.

Most authors who treat on the subject of prostitution try to make us believe that all women who choose this vocation perish in misery after a few years. I suppose they would excuse this falsehood by the discouragement-theory, but it is a falsehood nevertheless. Many of the weaker ones are indeed wrecked in a very short time, but there are also many, especially among the more intelligent, who retain physical and mental health up to old age and who, even as old women, cause us a great deal of trouble with their merciless intrigues. Another fact which, with more zeal for discouragement than truth, is generally omitted, is this: So far as cleanliness of the body in general and the sexual parts in particular and a proper and intelligent care of the latter are concerned, the so-called "fast women" of the better class are far superior to the great majority of "virtuous" women.

All writers on the subject tell us that this vice has existed at all times and in all countries where there was any compulsion in the sexual relations. Instead of duly heeding this clear and distinct lesson of history, most of them cannot draw any other conclusion from the fact than that embodied in the silly phrase, "It is a necessary evil!"

Necessary?—For whom?—For the ostracized, the outlaws?—Oh no, sheriff, police and hangman would soon clear away the "evil" then! For the poor, perhaps? They could not pay for the luxury.

Necessary, indeed!—Necessary for your high-born, well-bred young man, that he may not be driven to despair in the terrible labyrinth!

Necessary for your highest officers, your most respected citizens, your pillars of society, that they may keep on lying and cheating, in perfect safety, that they may always say "Yes" and "Amen" with solemn serenity whenever the pure girl, the virtuous wife, or the hyper-moral maiden-aunt sing the praises of that ideal exclusive love!

Necessary, indeed, lest strong desire might inspire some of these men with the courage to denounce these silly fantasies and tell the plain truth that they are no more than average, natural human beings with natural human impulses!

* * *

The word prostitution means the use of valuable and noble faculties for low and vile purposes. It does not designate a certain action, because the estimate of the action is dependent to quite an extent upon the individual's views of the value of the

faculties and his judgment of the purposes for which they are used. To very many people any sexual intercourse outside of a monogamic union appears extremely vile, hence as prostitution. This superstitious view we need not consider any more, as all intelligent reformers rejected it long ago.

There is a particular action which is unanimously termed prostitution, namely, the indiscriminate offering of the sexual faculties for business purposes. As the present generation does not generally consider *business* purposes *vile* purposes, we might dispute even here the justifiableness of the term. But, although the purpose may not be the lowest, it certainly is in these cases such an immense "lowering" of a truly beautiful faculty that even a free man would not hesitate to call it prostitution, just as he would call it a prostitution of his genius if a highly gifted and ingenious painter, instead of using his faculty where it would give happiness and satisfaction to himself and true joy to others, should paint business-signs simply because this brought him a larger income. As hardly any one seriously questions to-day the absolute right of the painter to paint business-signs instead of giving us beautiful works of art, so a free person would not for a minute question the right of a woman to afford sexual satisfaction for money instead of enjoying the delights of love. He may criticize the foolish choice, the vulgar taste; he may try to educate to a higher conception of use and joy, to show a better and happier way of living, but he will invariably leave the final decision

of the question to the man or woman most immediately concerned. And if real material want has caused the prostitution, he will promptly concede that bread is even more necessary than the enjoyment of love or the satisfaction of genius, he will feel no disrespect for these two "prostitutes," and his entire disgust will turn against the surrounding conditions which have caused the involuntary degradation.

The foregoing expression, "indiscriminate offering of the sexual faculties for business purposes," will be conceded to be the generally accepted explanation of the word "prostitution" in the stricter sense of the term. I suppose that it will require no further argument to convince every reader that this would soon disappear in a free society.

Sensitive persons, judging from a lofty and morally exalted standpoint, may however consider any sex-act, in which there is not mutually spontaneous sexual love, a degradation, and may call it prostitution whenever a practical economic consideration is the motive or a part of the motive for the act.

If we wish to consider prostitution in this broad sense, then we must concede that the only way to eradicate it entirely will be by such a radical change in our economic conditions as will guarantee to every man and every woman a perfect economic independence. I do not think such a state of affairs an impossibility, but as the economic question is not the subject of this treatise, I will not argue it here.

I do claim, however, that simply the fact of freedom from superstition in the realm of love and sexuality would promptly relieve us of ninety-nine per cent. of all the misery and corruption which now result from prostitution.

In order to show the absurdity of the assumption (which seems to be almost general to-day), that the fact of prostitution is in itself the natural cause of this misery and corruption, I call the attention of the reader to the history of ancient Greece. Think of these famous women, Aspasia, Thais, Lamia, Leontion, Lais, and Phryne. What were they? Merely prostitutes, the same as the inmates of our brothels, that is to say, women, who set a certain price upon the enjoyment of a night with them (an extremely exorbitant price in some cases, as the records show!). But there was one great difference between them and the prostitute of Christian lands—they were not despised by the public. There no man ever thought of spitting at and deriding the woman whom he had kissed and embraced the previous night! He conversed with her upon all the subjects which were of greatest interest to him, his art, his science, his political aspirations, and his philosophical theories, and because of her free and intimate social intercourse with men, the "hetære" was soon enabled to follow him in all these spheres with intelligent understanding and a true interest, which fact greatly enhanced her value as a participant in his enjoyments. As a result we find that the praise not only of the physical beauty but also of the mental ability of these

“prostitutes” was sung by the most gifted poets of the age, and, furthermore, that these women had a very important (and often exceedingly beneficent) influence upon the art and industry as well as the social and political development of their country. This shows us what free women can do even under very unfavorable circumstances (most of these “hetæres” were released slaves)—yes, even when they are forced to sell their favors!

The ancient Greeks understood and fully appreciated the value and beauty of that natural impulse which draws man to woman with irresistible power, and the free and unrestrained development of this feeling inspired them in the creation of those sublime works of art and science which even to-day receive our admiration. Every student will admit that the brightest pages in the history of the world are those which tell us of the time of glory of ancient Attica, and especially of its center, beautiful Athens. Nowhere else do we find such true refinement, such exquisite taste, such a general ardent admiration of real beauty and nobility—such admirable proficiency in the art of enjoying life as with these genial Hellenes. But, lo! the stern moralist will promptly try to dampen our enthusiasm with his gloomy criticism. He will tell us that it was just this “sinful craving for enjoyment” which was to blame for their final ruin; that it was their “freedom in love” (or laxity of morals as he would call it) which caused the perversions, the extreme licentiousness, the weakening debaucheries, and finally resulted in the degeneration of the race;

that the Periclean Age, in which wise and beautiful Aspasia greatly assisted in bringing art, science, and enjoyment of life to the utmost height, also laid the foundation for the "decadence." Do not be misled by such assertions! Remember that this "freedom" meant only the freedom of the selected few, of the "privileged class." For every "free Athenian" there were a number of absolute slaves, and the freedom in love of the former meant that he could buy the "hetære," receive the embrace of his wife as a matter of course, and force his slave to submission! Such conditions must finally cause demoralization even under the most favorable circumstances and in the best and noblest of men. Their sound and healthy views on sexuality, their fine æsthetic feeling, their desire for a genial and jovial enjoyment of life greatly relieved the odiousness of the relation, so that we may well presume that their slaves led a happier life than the average poor "free citizen" of to-day — but the extreme facility with which the "free Athenian" could gain the satisfaction of all his natural desires (on account of the slavish submission of others) was very liable to make him somewhat hebetated and "blasé," and to cause abnormal desires. There can be no such dangers in a free society! The exertion necessary to gain the consent of our free woman will prove to be very healthy and invigorating, and will always retain a far greater charm than the most piquant flavor which a slave could add to the sensual pleasures of her master.

But the moralist will further tell us that in

many cases these "hetæres" also exerted a decidedly corrupting influence. I will admit that, but the corrupting influence was due neither to the fact of prostitution nor to their "freedom;" it was the natural result of the lack of freedom, the serfdom of others. They were but few compared to the number of men, the great majority of females were deprived of every opportunity for a fair competition with them, for they were either regular slaves or "virtuous" women who, being strictly confined to the narrow limits of the home and household, had no chance to acquire true education, culture and refinement. This fact gave to the few unfair advantages, exceptional power, which, as we must always expect under such conditions, was grossly misused in many instances. If there is any reason to apprehend any such calamity in our free society, we must take due care that there are not too few free women compared to the number of free men.

A radical and consistent position in regard to prostitution is absolutely necessary for every woman who seriously desires the emancipation of the sex from serfdom. I am well aware that we read in hundreds of essays the demand: "Woman must own her own body," but, alas, in almost every case the proud declaration is almost nullified by the attached exceptions and conditions. Generally the essence of the further contention is something like this: Woman must own her body—except when she loves a man (in which case it should belong to the beloved man, of course!)—and, provided, that she makes such use thereof as the

writer or speaker would call a worthy one—that she does not “prostitute” herself! This, in my estimation, illustrates the weakest point in the entire agitation for woman’s rights.

When we say: “Woman must own her body,” we mean what we say, without reserve! This self-evidently includes her inalienable right to sell her sexual favors. I have endeavored to show you that in a free society even this would not have that degrading and corrupting influence which the superstitious mind expects as its inevitable result.

I will now give some reasons why we expect that such prostitution would not happen very often in a free society, although it would bring neither persecution nor contempt. Suppose that two women desired sexual intercourse with a certain man, one of them, a perfect beauty, demanding a stipulated price for her favor and desiring a customer; the other loving the man and longing for his sexual embrace. Who would win? I assure you that with 99 men out of 100 the first one would have no chance whatever. The prostitute of to-day, despised, degraded and corrupted as she is, can still compete quite successfully with the tyrannical “better half” and the “pure” maiden who wants a victim for life; the courtesan of ancient Athens found it quite easy to outshine the dull and ignorant housewife and the humble slave, but Phryne herself would have to change her plan of operation considerably in order to be successful in a free society.

Freedom from superstition will completely re-

verse the ethical view of prostitution. To-day we despise the woman who sells the favor and respect the man who buys. In a free society we might criticize the woman for her lack of judgment in the pursuit of happiness, we might try to show her the way to a greater happiness than money can buy, but we would have no real reason for disrespect or contempt, because her action clearly and unmistakably shows a certain value within herself. As to the man—his action clearly and unmistakably shows a lack of value! Notice these important points, which will be apparent to every one in a free society: The fact that a woman can *sell* her sexual favors is an absolute proof that she *could* gain sexual love; and on the other hand, the fact that a man *buys* sexual favors may be taken as a sure sign that he *cannot* gain sexual love! This latter aspect of the question, once fully understood, would be perfectly sufficient to relieve us of all prostitution in the stricter sense of the word.

There is not a man in the world who does not prefer the loving embrace of a beloved woman to cold submission for money, and there is not a woman who desires to prostitute herself—hence, a legal or moral law against the “vice” is an absurdity. Give us freedom in love and there will be no more prostitution in the narrower meaning of the word. Then let us strive to bring about such conditions as will assure to every man and every woman economic independence. After we have reached that goal we may judge sexual love and its degradation from that lofty point of view which

at present not a single person can claim to have attained.

In our free society no man will ever think of buying love (what a ridiculous expression!), but he may often use his money to assist him in gaining love—and, so long as we must contend with this generally corrupting “medium of exchange” (and speculation!), I cannot conceive of any nobler use for the “almighty dollar.”

XXII.

Crime and Disease.

IN this chapter, I will briefly allude to a few points which are particularly well adapted to show the value of the new theory.

Think of the innumerable tragedies which the modern drama, the thousands of realistic novels, and, above all, the experiences of actual life reveal to you, in which the terrible outcome seems but the inevitable result of the complications; apply the new theory to each case, that is, imagine that the respective men and women had freed themselves from superstition and had accepted the new love-ideal—and you will have to admit that this would in almost every instance change the gloomy tragedy into a joyful comedy!

Study for a week or two the reports of crimes given in any one of our great dailies and the reports of a criminal court, and observe in how many cases the crime is obviously the direct result of superstition and the ensuing unnatural restraint in the sex-life of human beings, and in how many of the remaining cases the tragedy may be easily traced to the same cause.

Think of the so-called slum-districts of our large cities with their thousands of children, of whom we can reasonably expect only that they will become bitter enemies of human society.

Study the character of those men and women in your immediate surroundings whom you call bad, and investigate as to the original causes of their depravity.

Think of the fact that almost every youth comes to that terrible crossing point from whence every road leads to either misery or degradation.

Then you will get some idea of how immensely crimes would be diminished by freedom in this sphere.

The effect would be equally advantageous in regard to diseases. I will here name but a few points, which are so plain that they will have to be admitted by every sane person :

1. In a free society every child would self-evidently be the result of sexual preference (elective affinity) and we all know the vital importance of this in securing a physically and mentally healthy progeny. What are the conditions to-day in regard to this? So far as the "children of love" (those born out of wedlock) are concerned, they generally receive such miserable treatment from the first day of their existence in the womb that the good effect of a proper beginning is soon annihilated, while as to the marriages of to-day, nobody will claim that more than one-half of them are love-matches, and in many of these latter the love is merely "spiritual" and results in sexual mismating. Hence, we

find real sexual love only in the minority of unions. The worst of all, however, is this: Even under exceptionally favorable conditions we are not at all sure, (thanks to that grand institution of "living together") that the issue will not happen to be the result of a rather dull and indifferent sexual embrace (as "custom" may cause it even between passionate lovers in their honey-moon), and that further issues in after years will not be weak and crippled "children of duty!" Of late we hear a great deal about "laws of heredity," "scientific propagation," etc., but the suggestions and advice under these headings must sound like the bitterest irony to the great mass of men and women of to-day. To the "moral" person, yes, even to every "exclusivist" Free-Lover they are practically worthless. In a free society, however, the people will pay considerable attention to these subjects, and as they will have the chance to make the best possible use of their knowledge, we may expect grand results.

2. In the foregoing I have shown that comparatively few human beings get what might be termed a "fair start" in their existence. Of these fortunate ones many are seriously hampered in their growth. Superstitions hinder the pregnant woman from leading such a life as would be most conducive to the healthy and beautiful development of her child, and poverty often renders any decent nutrition and education absolutely unattainable. In a free society there would be no conception except where the conditions appeared favorable, *i. e.*, where there

was a fair guarantee that the child would be well conceived, and well cared for from the beginning of its existence to its independence.

3. In spite of the decidedly poor chances, we still see a number of children develop into youths and maidens who are strong and healthy in body and mind, but after maturity superstition again throws a large percentage of these into the ranks of the diseased. I have explained this in previous chapters, but I failed to call attention to the fact that ignorance on sexual subjects adds a great deal to the dangers. What I said about scientific propagation is equally true of sexual hygiene in general. Very few people know anything about either, and the great majority of these few are in about the same position that the patient was for whom the physician prescribed an oyster stew and a bottle of Bordeaux, while the sufferer hardly knew where to get a piece of bread for the next day. In a free society sexual hygiene will be appreciated, and you may rest assured that there every youth and maiden will receive intelligent advice how to lead a healthy and happy sex-life and—what is more important, will be able to act accordingly.

4. Every physician can tell you that very many ailments and diseases are horribly neglected and maltreated on account of a false sense of shame. In a free society sexual diseases would receive the same care and attention and would be spoken of as unrestrainedly as are other diseases.

5. You have all heard of the appalling fre-

quency of abortion and the use of dangerous drugs for this purpose (with which thousands of women annually ruin their constitutions), and you all know that freedom from superstition would relieve us of this evil.

6. Last but not least, I call attention to those great evils, contagious venereal diseases, and especially to their most formidable kind, syphilis. What horrible pictures of misery and degeneration these diseases present to us now! Secretly and insidiously, they sneak in everywhere; it seems impossible to arrest their growth and extension; in many thousands of cases they are horribly neglected, and their poison is transmitted to children and grandchildren. Of all the pests which torture humankind these venereal diseases are declared by many to be the most malignant, the greatest curses! And yet the truth is that of all the serious contagious diseases they are the *least malignant*. They do not come to us in any mysterious manner through the air or through the water, they are transmissible only by direct contact, they are easily recognized, may be easily prevented, and can in almost all cases be easily cured if properly attended to in their first stages. Our "moralists" make this impossible however, yes, they seem to feel a great deal of malignant joy over the fact that a "just God" or a "revengeful Nature" has created such an excellent punishment for the "sins of the flesh!" Their mean and menacing position regarding these diseases should suffice to lead any humane thinker to reject with disgust their so-called morality.

What we need for a prompt arrest and a complete extermination of the evil is simply this: Rational treatment; prevention of infection, and prevention of transmission to the next generation. The present moral code makes each one of these steps an impossibility, while in a free society they would inevitably be taken. Do you doubt the possibility of this reform? Do you still think that you are pure and noble but that others are so depraved that they would find joy and satisfaction in infecting their fellow-beings with dangerous diseases? Then, I would tell you that you have still the greatest of all superstitions to overcome. Meanwhile, however, I will give you some practical reasons for my assertion: Why is it that men and women appear so terribly unscrupulous to-day in carrying this poison to one or many of their fellow-beings and transmitting it even to their own children? I claim that in every case it is due either to ignorance, or to the fact that to be conscientious in this respect means a terrible sacrifice of self. The man or woman of the present moral society, who has been so unfortunate as to inherit or to contract a chronic, contagious venereal disease, must argue thus: If I manage to conceal the fact (which the general "sense of shame" makes extremely easy), then I can enjoy all kinds of love and finally win one of the most worthy and beautiful of human beings for a life-companion and sexual mate, while if I am conscientious I must give up forever all that makes life worth living and by confessing the truth brand myself as an outcast from human

society. Which course is he or she most likely to take?

In a free society the condition would be completely reversed. Syphilitic men and women, although openly and truthfully acknowledging their ailment, could fully enjoy all the pleasures of love and friendship, to which their worth and capacity entitled them (*not* excluding sexual intercourse either), while to conceal their condition and willfully infect others with their disease would be the superlative of meanness and the surest way of spoiling their chances for obtaining any future happiness, as no false sense of shame would shield them there.

I hope that those readers who still insist upon believing in the "innate depravity" of many of our fellow beings will at least admit that even the most depraved of them may be expected to be "conscientious" where conscientiousness *pays best!*

In conclusion, I will say that that self-evident result, the diminishing of crime and disease in human society, ought to be in itself a sufficient reason for every humane Freethinker to accept with enthusiasm the theory of sexual freedom.

XXIII.

Ebriosity.

AN APPEAL TO THE WOMEN.

I SUPPOSE that many of you have often wondered what it is that gives such a peculiar, mysterious charm to the inebriating cup, whereby so many of the so-called stronger sex are reduced so often to extremely weak mortals. As it will be our principle henceforth not to keep any secrets from you, dear ladies, and as I hope that it may cause you to judge your weak brethren a trifle less severely, I will initiate you into the mysteries.

For a great number of men (from the most intelligent and refined to the most vulgar classes) the "grandest moments" of their lives, affording the highest enjoyment possible to them, are those which are spent in extravagant drinking-bouts. Associated with sympathizing comrades and friends (and fellow-sufferers perhaps) they submit to the intoxicating influence of the strong beverage because this alone can deliver them from a legion of

paltry scruples which cramp and oppress them in every-day life; for a few jolly hours they can give free vent to their inmost thoughts and feelings because intoxication has freed them from the dread of the criticizing, censuring philistines, from the fear of giving offense or of being misunderstood. This is what leads thousands again and again to excessive drinking. Treacherous and fickle though it may be, the inebriating cup is undeniably a kind of "liberator!" Many valuable talents need it for the full development of their genius, because it frees them temporarily from many little scruples and weaknesses; to many it gives the only opportunity to revel in enthusiastic poetical feelings, which seem utterly out of place in the dreary, practical, and prosaic world of to-day; for many it is the only means of bringing joy, as no other power can remove the dark barriers and open the way for the longed-for "lightheartedness;" while, alas, many crave for it for no other reason than that it delivers them, for a short time at least, from dreary thoughts, from anguish and despair. That drunkenness, especially in the poorer classes, offers you so many ugly pictures of stupidity, vulgarity, and depravity, shows very clearly that the lives of these persons have been deprived so completely of all poetic beauty that even the dream-like condition of intoxication cannot conjure any delightful visions to their minds, that the only desire is to benumb, to forget, or to gain courage to show to this miserable world with scornful laughter the contempt which they must feel for it.

You tell me that it is pernicious, depraving, unworthy of a gentleman, to get drunk. You may be right. Well, then do as the intelligent physician would do, search for the causes and try to remove them. See to it that human life shall appear full of poetic beauty even to the sober man—and what could be better adapted for this than love? Exert yourselves to bring about such conditions that henceforth not a single human being's existence shall contain so much bitter pain and hopeless misery and be so destitute of pleasures and joys that he shall crave for the Lethe which brings oblivion. Sexual freedom will render powerful assistance in this. Think of it, how often the craving for excessive drinking is caused by a loveless life, by marital misery, family troubles (many undesired children, etc.), by the brothels—and furthermore by the fact that the saloon is the only place for a great number where they can talk and hear about things which are of great interest to them and which are "tabooed" in "good" society.

Imagine all of your drunkards transferred to a free society and ask yourself the question what effect that would have upon them. In your society some of them had "faithful" wives, who furnished them sexual gratification upon demand (very often with a feeling of loathing and disgust, so that a number of diseased, stupid or idiotic children resulted therefrom—they did their "duty," they were obedient!)—others bought for a few dollars a beautiful young woman whenever they were in need of one, and a third class knew nothing but stupid

self-abuse. With us the longing for love will soon be aroused in all of them, but in such a condition as they are now they will not be able to win the affection of a woman. They may drink whatever they like and as much as they like, but the powerful impulse which draws man to woman will force them always to appear worthy of love—and remember, there is no end to this wooing. This will prove to be an infallible remedy, compared with which all the compulsion which you can imagine, as well as your “Keeley-cure,” are but miserable palliatives.

In speaking of intoxication in the foregoing, I thought only of those men to whom the drinking of spirituous beverages does not appear as an offense or misdemeanor. The spectacle becomes far more gloomy where tyranny has extended its pernicious work even to this sphere.

Poor Yankee boy, whom a loving mother has anxiously guarded from the knowledge of any intoxicating beverage until you have reached manhood, who has been taught that it is a sin, yes, a crime to touch a drop of liquor! a physical need (inherited perhaps), a moment of weakness, the irresistible invitation of a friend, or other sufficient cause, has led you to take a small glass of the strong liquor. Your system being unaccustomed to the intoxicant, it has a wonderful effect—it causes you a pleasant sensation, a lusty thrill. Seeing that you have sinned anyway a little more or less will not make any great difference! One glass follows the other. Result: Terrible “blues,” bitter self-reproach and the firm resolve to guard against the

sin in future. But, alas, the forbidden fruit will forever be the most tempting. The artificially suppressed craving increases with every day. Being conscious of a craving for “evil,” for “sin,” you lose your self-respect and with that the courage and the power of resistance. You *sin* again and again. Very soon you must drink, drink, if for no other object than to benumb the tortures of conscience—and six months later you are but a miserable ruin of your former self. Diseased in body and mind, without the last vestige of your former virility and buoyancy, devoured by all kinds of debauchery, with a look of perfect idiocy in your eyes you stagger into the arms of the horrified mother. And his mother? She will promptly curse the “vile stuff” which has made such a wreck of her once healthy and noble boy. She will curse the saloon-keeper, she will curse the *weak men* for not ridding the world of this “dangerous enemy.” And finally in her mad despair she will call upon all mothers, all maidens, to unite with her in the attempt to demolish every distillery, every brewery, yes, every vineyard in order to prevent weak men from sinning!

Poor deluded mother! Look at yonder white-haired man, who is still so hard at work at his daily task, while he sings a gay song and greets you with laughing eyes. Let me tell you that this man has since the third year of his life tasted this “vile stuff” almost every day, yes, he has often taken “too much” of it even—and yet, although 70 years old, he is far from being a ruin. Should

this not lead you to the thought that it was not the "vileness" of the "stuff" which has ruined the life of your boy, but that it was your superficial judgment, your tyrannical "Thou shalt!" and "Thou shalt not!" which has caused all of the harm? Study human nature before you judge and condemn. If then you still have the conviction that spirituous beverages are not in any way necessary for the healthiest and happiest life of any human being, then exert your energy to remove all that which causes the longing for such stimulants. If you find, however, that this is not possible at present, then teach your son to control the impulse as a free, strong, and courageous man, yielding to it wherever it will bring joy to him and others without doing harm, and controlling it wherever it may endanger his manly dignity. It is always extremely dangerous to preach, Beware of temptation! and there is but one kind of defense which is still more absurd, and that is the attempt to shield your *protege* from temptation by compulsion. A weak impulse, which may be perfectly natural, is thereby increased to a morbid craving, and the teaching that any indulgence is a great sin or a crime has no other effect than that one weak moment robs the young man of the most important requisite for a manly control of the impulse, self-esteem and self-reliance.

"A poor deluded mother" I called this woman, and I am confident that many of you will promptly agree with me in this, but, dear ladies, have you not acted in an equally silly, absurd and tyrannical

manner in regard to another enjoyment, which certainly is absolutely necessary for a healthy and happy life, in regard to an impulse which the history of humankind has proved to be ineradicable?

Of our saloons, I will say that the same principle holds good in regard to them as does in the case of any class of human beings: The more you despise them the more despicable they will become. In those temperance places where the saloon is considered a "den of vice" it generally comes pretty near to deserving that title. In those cities, however, in which the sale of liquor is considered just as honorable a business as any other, you will find most of the saloons to be bright and cheerful places, where there is good company and where you may take your lady friend without danger of causing her any great embarrassment, and in the free society the public amusement hall will often be the grandest and most beautiful building in the city.

I believe that every gentleman will promptly agree with me when I say that even in our jolliest drinking-bouts the presence of the opposite sex might greatly enhance the enjoyment. But they would have to be free and proud women. Where can we find them? Here is "sweet innocence," who tremblingly shrinks from any ardent look, from any passionate word of love as from a terrible ghost; here is another woman, who coolly calculates how many dollars it may bring to her, and all others are merely slaves, each one of whom has her owner, be it for life or through a limited con-

tract "on time." I am well aware that many of these slaves are very willing to "sin in secrecy," to cheat their "masters" here and there, but that does not make them any freer; in society they are generally the most reserved and often appear as the most enthusiastic admirers of "virtue." In vain we would look for free women, and so it is but natural that we should often desire to withdraw to the exclusive society of men for our most exuberant social enjoyments and especially when we wish to do homage to the Gods, Bacchus and Gambrinus. That such hilarity is so extremely liable to turn into vulgarity is due to the fact that the ennobling influence of love is missing.

In a free society there will be no reason to exclude women from any social enjoyment, and where free men and women gather for such a purpose they may venture without any danger to indulge in a "nobler" juice than that of the lemon. Their genuine sense of shame will keep them from vulgarity and from all actions which would appear odious or non-æsthetic. As neither gold nor law nor vows of love can secure them the possession of a human being, their everlasting desire for harmonious association will force them forward with magic power in the constant striving to appear worthy of love!

I do not claim to know whether the consumption of spirituous liquors would be decreased in a free society, but I do know that the ennobling influence of Free Love would promptly become apparent in this sphere as in all others. In regard to temperance, I would say that it is mainly a ques-

tion of hygiene. The arguments advanced by our Prohibitionists and "Teetotalers" are so extremely superficial so far that I consider them absolutely valueless. I expect a more intelligent treatment of the subject from free men and women.

My personal experiences in this and the old country have given me the conviction that even in the Golden Age to come many a free man will agree with Martin Luther's maxim that the man

Who loves not woman, wine and song,
Remains a fool his whole life long!

XXIV.

Woman's Emancipation.

I AM a Freethinker, but I did not consider it necessary in this treatise to point out the "Mistakes of Moses," the inconsistencies of the Bible, and so forth, to substantiate my position toward the Christian religion, because this has been done in a perfectly satisfactory manner by many others.

I am strongly in favor of woman's emancipation; I hold that the female sex is as important to and as useful in human society as is the male sex; that there is not a single right or privilege of the individual to which woman is not entitled as much as is man, but I would consider it a useless waste of time to argue the point, to prove that woman is not an inferior being, that she is no more a weak creature requiring leading-strings than is man. Hundreds of intelligent women and a great number of men have substantiated this position by arguments which are as plain and irrefutable as the witty criticisms of the Bible with which the great Colonel causes our ministers of the gospel so much trouble and heart-ache.

I claim that both of these questions, Free-thought vs. Religion and Woman's Emancipation vs. Woman's Subordination, have been so thoroughly ventilated in modern literature that any person of fair intelligence must reach my viewpoint as just stated if he really wants the truth! But, alas! many do not want the truth, because they are afraid of it. That Freethought as well as Woman's Emancipation still meets with such a general opposition is not due so much to a lack of intellectual capacity in the masses as to the fact that neither one of these new theories has been able so far to prove that it makes men and women better and happier beings. I have stated already why the Freethinkers cannot furnish this proof, and I will now try to show why the Woman emancipators' cause labors under the same disadvantage. They have rejected with scorn and disgust that part of the Christian dogma which preaches the slavish submission of woman to man, but they have retained the most important part of the superstitions in regard to love- and sex-life which we have inherited from religion; they are striving for equal rights with man in the fields of politics, art, science, industry and commerce, but they neglect the most important feature, sexual freedom; many of them go so far as to denounce Christian marriage, but when one of their women falls in love with a man she promptly craves the same old mutual possession which is so sure to make a master of the stronger and a slave of the weaker owner. These half-measures and inconsistencies have placed the

emancipated woman in such an unnatural and unhealthful position that the conservative observer must feel that she has paid too dearly for her liberties. So far as economic and political emancipation are concerned, we can claim with just pride that the energetic work of our high-spirited, courageous American women has effected the result that there is not another country in the world which is so far advanced in these respects as is the United States. But if the question were asked, Has this made them any happier or has it increased the happiness of others? we would have to answer, No!—and, furthermore, if we were asked, Has not this had the tendency to make them *unwomanly*?—then I, for one, would unhesitatingly answer, Yes! that is the inevitable result of the unnatural condition. For a woman who wishes to study law, medicine or any other science, or who desires to become a public agitator in politics or sociology, free and unrestrained social intercourse with men is an absolute necessity. For the ordinary “weak” woman such free and unrestrained intercourse brings great danger for her “virtue” and “morality;” our emancipated woman wishes to remain virtuous and moral and so she must exert herself to the utmost so persistently to suppress her natural impulse, that finally she will be able to remain perfectly cool and indifferent in the most intimate intercourse with the opposite sex. And if, in spite of this, she falls in love with a man whom she considers her “true mate” and who is willing to offer her his “exclusive” love, she instinctively feels that

even then she must cautiously guard her feelings from becoming too passionate, as that would greatly endanger her "independence" in the resulting relation. Everywhere she is obliged to suppress her sex-nature in order to gain the desired goal; again and again it appears to her that the sexual impulse (which gives pleasure only to man while it brings serious duties and hard work to woman) is the greatest enemy of woman's emancipation; she curses the sensual man who leads her into temptation, and demands of the women that they fortify themselves by "purity" and "elevate" the sensual men to that lofty condition in which they also can be cool and indifferent in the physical proximity of the opposite sex. And what does all this terrible effort mean? It means to exert yourself to make man unmanly and woman unwomanly! As a healthy sexual impulse is necessary for true manliness, so it is equally necessary for true womanliness.

For the free woman of this country the Woman's Question has virtually ceased to exist. As to the condition of the married woman, that does not affect her, as she does not intend to marry, and the unmarried woman in the United States has as much economic independence as the average man, yes, in many respects her economic chances are even better. It is true that the woman has not so much chance of gaining a political office and that in many branches her wages for the same work are still lower than those of men, but this is more than counterbalanced by the facts that custom makes

“living” considerably cheaper for a woman than for a man, and that in one great and important occupation, for which women are specially adapted, *i. e.*, housekeeping and “home-making,” there is comparatively the least competition. It is ridiculously absurd, of course, to claim that this latter should be woman’s only vocation, but the views of many “womens-rights-women” are just as absurd. The latter seem to labor under the queer superstition that there is something particularly degrading and enslaving about this kind of work. It is not the work which is degrading—the degradation consists only in the slavish conditions under which it is generally performed. After women have once come to understand that to do this work need not necessarily be the self-evident duty resulting from the affirmation, “I love you,” that it should be treated the same as any other vocation, then they will also realize that this represents an ability in woman (“house-keeping” and “home-making,” particularly the latter) which gives them a decided economic advantage over men. I would certainly advise every free woman, who is in the least inclined to such work, to pay some attention to the development of her faculties of this kind. Experience has shown that this need not materially interfere with her aims in other directions, and it may prove a valuable economic safeguard at some future time. It is often claimed that a grave objection to so-called housework consists in the fact that it generally requires too many hours per day. Any vocation which forces you to work 12 to 14 hours per

day is of course enslaving and depraving, but I could not imagine a strike in which I would place so much faith as in an "eight-hour-movement" of good housekeepers, duly associated. "Scabs" would not have half the chance there as in other strikes. For the emancipation of woman it was of the utmost importance that all fields of art, science, and industry should be opened to her, but after "home-making" ceases to be her "ordained" duty it may become one of her greatest strongholds.

Well, our free woman will feel that she needs a great deal of emancipation yet, that there is still a heavy burden of slavery and unjust servitude from which she should be released, but she will also feel that in each and every case her brother, man, needs exactly the same emancipation. She will scorn the idea of a fight of women against men, but she will enter with courage and enthusiasm into the fight of free men and women against tyrants of either sex or any creed—and I am afraid that she will find the worst tyrants and the greatest number of them within the pale of her own sex. Whether she be sexually weak or strong she will not be afraid of the "sensuality" in any man. If he is unsympathetic to her, it will be an extremely easy task to ward him off. If she finds him to be congenial she will greatly enjoy his wooing and may find intense pleasure in his physical proximity even when she has no desire for the sexual embrace. If she does not desire the latter, there is no reason why she shall submit, while if she does crave it, there is no reason why she shall not add the phys-

ical enjoyment to the spiritual pleasures. Being thus free from superstition she will never be afraid of love, no matter in what form it may show itself; even where she cannot return the feeling she will find some good use for it—but very often she will be able to fully reciprocate and reach the ideal enjoyment of love, the last experience of which may be fully as beautiful as the first. Her love-life will be free from mercenary considerations and she will retain her freedom by giving and receiving love without reserve and without conditions.

If a man desires her as his house-keeper and she feels inclined for such work, she may accept a favorable offer even if she has no love for him. She may prefer, however, to make a home for a congenial man for a considerably less remuneration, but whether with or without love there will always be a business agreement. And if she should desire maternity she will find that there are as many men who desire to be fathers as there are women who wish to become mothers, and that not a single one of the former will expect ever to gain that privilege without offering a just equivalent for that grandest and noblest of all woman's work, child-bearing and child-nursing. It has often been said that the fact that the "fruits of love" (a very pretty name for children, which, alas, but very few deserve at present) are a burden to woman, must forever make the latter dependent upon man. Under the present general code of morals this is true of course and the "beautiful" story of the punishment of sinful Eve still holds good. But our free woman is bold

enough to declare that even child-bearing is not by any means her "self-evident duty," nor the necessary result of her love, and thereby reaches the conclusion that whenever she does undertake the task it will bring her genuine joy and satisfaction and general appreciation; and at the same time give her another little economic advantage over man, for the simple reason that it leaves the production of a highly valued thing, generally considered a necessity, exclusively at the option of women!

As a man would, so a free woman would gladly accept the help and assistance of a friend and comrade in case of illness or misfortune, but she will not expect to be "kept," "maintained," or "supported" by a man. As the young man is expected to choose a vocation for earning his living, so the free woman will select that field of action for the purpose which seems most suitable to her, and whether she becomes a house-keeper or a sea-captain, a Kindergarten-teacher or a doctor of medicine, a book-keeper or a barber, a musician or a painter, there is not the slightest danger for her true womanliness, because there is no reason to suppress her sex-nature. And man, perceiving that none of these vocations deprives her of any of her value as a woman, but that on the contrary her higher intelligence, her more profound knowledge of the world, make her a more useful friend and comrade, a nobler companion in spiritual pleasures and sexual enjoyments, will gladly welcome her co-operation in any branch of art, science, or industry.

Her competition may cause a slight depreciation in the valuation of his services, but for this loss he receives a more than sufficient compensation, *i. e.*, the chance to enjoy all of the pleasures of love without being forced thereby to "sustain" a woman, nor even to support a child, unless he should have the express desire and the perfect ability so to do.

If a free woman happens to be economically somewhat "independent" she may decide to have a child as all her own and she will certainly not be respected any the less for it in a free society, but it is my firm conviction that these cases will be the rare exceptions; even the wealthy free woman will generally prefer to choose a father for her child, assigning him a "half-interest" in it, realizing that there are many advantages in fatherhood besides the financial support.

Unless it is gained through deceit, the love of a free woman for a man may be expected to last for life, as it need not be extinguished for the sake of any other affection. She will be a truer friend, a more reliable partner and comrade, because no passion will induce her to unfaithfulness.

In most cases, perhaps, she will be far from economic independence, but she will perceive that her comrade, man, is no less dependent. Together with him she will strive to bring about such a condition of society that human beings will not be enslaved as at present by that mad struggle for the "medium of exchange." She will realize, however, that even under existing circumstances she has the same chances, the same rights and privileges as

man possesses, and she will not consider herself at a disadvantage because she is a woman!

At this point I hear an energetic objection: "How can you claim that women have the same rights as men have so long as they are not allowed to vote nor to sit on a jury?" Woman's Suffrage! —indeed, I had almost neglected this important subject altogether. As I should hate to be caught in an inconsistency, I must somewhat overstep the limits of this treatise and declare that I deny the right of any one man or a million of men to make compulsory laws for me; that therefore it is but consistent if I deny that right to women also. I will not argue this question at present, but will simply examine woman's suffrage from a practical standpoint as it would be viewed by any intelligent free woman of to-day. Why should she desire to vote? Will she not perceive at once that nothing could more seriously endanger that freedom for which she longs than woman's suffrage? Will she not see that in the upholding of the old moral code, which she rejects, women are more tyrannically disposed than men?

We have reason to rejoice at the fact that the "emancipated" women of this country have been so successful in rousing women from their lethargic submission and imbuing them with the consciousness of their rights as individuals (equal to those of men), because this is absolutely necessary for any true reform in human society. Their courage, energy and perseverance are worthy of our profound admiration, and it has often appeared to me

that a dozen women could do more to bring about happier conditions in human society than fifty men—if they were animated by the true spirit of liberty. But, alas, so far the one and only aspiration of the “emancipated” woman seems to be to gain power to *rule* and to *govern*! she seems to be unable to conceive of any other way to “get even” with men! It is because of this that a movement, which in itself is truly progressive, has brought about a decided retrogression in general affairs, that the immediate results present to us many dreary and ominous pictures of unhealthy reaction. It is due to woman’s influence that this country is in great danger of becoming the least free of all civilized nations; without her influence many of our laws, which are inexcusable infringements upon the inalienable rights of the individual, such as Sunday laws, prohibition laws, and Comstock laws, would be impossible at this time. The “New Woman” is yet too thoroughly imbued with the “spirit of Cæsar” to be much if any help to true progress. Being more consistent and less cowardly than man, she is now the most dangerous enemy of liberty. Free her from superstition and she will be invincible in the fight for freedom.

I borrow the term just used from a book by B. O. Flower entitled “The New Time.” The work contains an excellent description of how the “spirit of Cæsar” (ruling through brute force—militarism) is reigning everywhere in present society. The author desires to introduce instead the “spirit of Jesus” and repeatedly and emphatically declares “that

the plan of action ought always to be along the line of *persuasion*." The method of Cæsar applied to-day says, "This man troubleth us. He speaks against the established order; he is an innovator and fomenters discontent. Therefore we will crucify him, and that will end the whole matter." In place of this the spirit of Jesus should reign, which would cause "a grand evolutionary movement which shall mark man's rise above the old-time method of progress by brute force; an advance in which the discord of hate, the roar of cannon, will not be heard, but in their stead the laughter of millions of hope-warmed hearts floating from homes now filled with gloom; an advance in which joy, the luminous child of love, shall lead our people into the new time, while amazed history, gazing long before she writes, at last shall pen the story of the first civilization of earth great and wise enough to be just!" A noble sentiment and a noble aim! every true lover of liberty would joyfully accept both. And how does the author expect to reach this goal? By uniting with the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Baptists *et al.*, and especially with their ministers! Don't laugh, please! Is Mr. B. O. Flower, the editor of the "Arena" such an ignoramus that he does not know that this spirit of Jesus, as he defines it, is nowhere to be found less than in the Christian church itself? Does he not know that these Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and their ministers are constantly clamoring for all kinds of prohibitory laws? and does he not know that legal law, if it means anything, means the rule

and government of "brute force," that there is positively no "persuasion" about it except in saying, "Thou shalt do so, or we will punish or kill thee?" Or is he simply a mean hypocrite? I will not venture to decide this question, but I am convinced that the book will inspire many readers with glowing enthusiasm for the cause who the next moment will use their energy to have another law enacted which will force men to live "according to Jesus!"

When I see a number of sweet-faced, innocent-looking women and girls of the Y. P. S. C. E., or the Epworth League, working so energetically for Sunday-laws, Prohibition-laws, and the like, their eyes shining with love for humankind, their cheeks glowing with enthusiasm for the cause of "bettering men and women," I always feel inclined to say, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do!"; but I think it is about time to overcome this weakness and to denounce the tyrant, wherever I find him. Let us henceforth not be soothed by their claims of "good intentions." The most cruel tyrants, the worst Cæsars, have made the same claim; their atrocious deeds were always meant "for the good of the people."

Some time ago the "Arena" contained a number of articles on the "Age of Consent Laws," in which several "reverend reformers" and a few pseudo-radical women wrote strongly in favor of raising the age of consent to 18 or 20 years. What does such a law mean? A man falls in love with a young woman who happens to be but 17 years old and receiving her consent they enjoy the pleasures

of sexual love with each other without desiring to enslave themselves by a legal certificate of mutual ownership. The before-mentioned worthy ladies and gentlemen, together with a number of others, have decreed to call this *rape*! They send out their hirelings to catch the man and imprison him for from five to twenty years at hard labor. And if the man tries to defend himself against this outrageous assault and finds a number of friends to assist him in this, then these noble people will call it "revolution" and will send out their militia or their "regular" hired murderers to shoot down the "mob" or to catch them alive so that the sheriff can have the pleasure of "hanging them by the neck until they are dead," where the moralists can all have a good look at the imposing spectacle in perfect safety!

I wonder whether Mr. Flower would call this the "spirit of Jesus" or the "spirit of Cæsar?" His esteemed co-workers would of course call it the "spirit of Jesus," seeing that the law has such a good, moral intention, namely, the protection of poor weak woman!

I hope and trust that the free woman will be proud enough to feel that any law made for the special purpose of "protecting women" is an insult of womankind. I hope that she will be glad that women have not been sullied yet by the degrading and depraving practices of politics, that she can say to men: We women have had nothing to do with the making of your laws, hence there is not even a shadow of a reason why we should respect them.

We will not be ruled or governed by you, nor do we care to rule or govern you or any of our own sex. And if her sister tells her that woman's suffrage would result in excellent laws for the special protection of women, I hope she will answer as I would like to have every laborer of this country reply to the glib promises of the politician. Take away the unjust special privileges bestowed on others, give me a free and full opportunity to utilize my energies, and I will need neither your regular nor your special laws to protect me.

I do not wish to imbue any one with the "spirit of Jesus"—there is too much slavish submissiveness flavored with arrogant vanity in it to suit me; it makes love a duty and preaches such an unnatural "virtue" as altruism, which is extremely liable to cause hypocrisy—nevertheless I can respect Jesus and any one of his honest and true followers. I will gladly listen to their efforts at persuasion if they are fair enough to give me an equal chance to persuade them, but I hope that every free man and woman will join with me in the fight against those tyrants, be they sweet-faced women or fierce-eyed men, who wish to "persuade" us by their own or by hired brute force.

And in conclusion I will say that the worst foes of human happiness are those hypocrites who try to hide the spirit of Cæsar behind the mask of Jesus.

The Social Question.

THE social question pertains to all the rules and agencies which govern or are proposed to govern relations of man to man, the intercourse of human beings. It is therefore frequently divided into a number of different branches according to the diverse spheres to which it may refer (the sexual, the social, or the commercial intercourse). In this chapter I intend to treat on that most intricate and most essential branch of the all-important subject, which is generally termed the economic question, pertaining to the ownership of the natural resources and the artificial means for the production of material goods and the manner of dividing the latter amongst the members of the human family. I do not pretend to give you a solution of this question, but will simply try to investigate its relation to the sexual question (including the Love, Marriage, and Woman's Question), of which I do claim that I have offered a solution, which from the present viewpoint of human society, may be considered fairly perfect. I intend to establish these propositions: 1. That sexual freedom as herein

proposed will render a powerful assistance in the solution of the economic question and of the social question in general; 2. That the agitation of and propaganda for sexual freedom should predominate in our exertions for improving human society, that sexual freedom must be the first step taken in order to reach a satisfactory solution of the economic question—in spite of the fact that the latter may be justly called the most important problem.

The first point to be considered is this: How much value does the preventive check possess for the poorer classes irrespective of sexual freedom. The enthusiastic followers of so-called Neo-Malthusianism (the theory of Malthus applied by means of the preventive check) seem to claim that it would bring a perfect solution of the labor question, and they argue something like this: Every person who studies this question will find that there are a number of industries which for a long, long time, yes, for many centuries, have constantly paid the *lowest* wages in spite of the fact that the work performed belongs to the hardest, the most disagreeable, and the most necessary of all industrial labor. Why are so many human beings again and again so foolish as to devote themselves to this work instead of choosing more agreeable and better paying vocations? For the simple reason that the crowding into these vocations is not by any means voluntary, that in generation after generation many thousands are born for and into them. By this we should not understand that there is any particular legal or moral compulsion connected

with the accident of birth. The compulsion is of a far stricter and severer kind, *i. e.*, the nutrition and education which these people receive qualify them for only one particular profession or a certain class of work. The same principle holds good for all classes of human beings. The wealthier the parents, the higher their intelligence, the greater is the list of professions from which their children may choose; the poorer the parents, the lower their standard of intelligence, the less chance of selection there will be for their progeny, so that many are confined within very narrow limits, and for many others there is hardly any choice left. Under ordinary circumstances these two latter classes, the poor and the poorest, increase even more rapidly than those who are better situated, hence the former, all going in the same direction, must crowd each other more and more, while the better situated have a broad field in which to scatter. This is one of the reasons why, under existing circumstances, poverty must necessarily increase very rapidly, why the difference between the wealthy and the poor must grow wider year by year. This would have become yet far more apparent in the history of civilized nations if a great revolution had not caused a general “mixing up” every little while, and if it had not been for some “preventive checks”—crime, disease, and starvation—in the poor and poorest classes, which constantly decreased to some extent the number of competitors.

Suppose now that we should make the procreation of children a perfectly voluntary act—then

the principle of the ever-equalizing effect of supply and demand would hold good and would free us from these horrible "preventives." The poor laborer, who hardly earns enough to sustain himself, would take due care not to procreate any children whom he would have to support, and educate into his profession. He would not bring forth any competitors, influx from outside there would be little or none, the natural checks, old age and death, would constantly thin the ranks, so that soon the demand would be greater than the supply and the wages would have to be raised. Another point worthy of consideration is found in the fact that large families make *moving* far more difficult and hence are another great impediment to the equalizing principle.

I consider these arguments irrefutable, if they are offered to substantiate no other claim than that the preventive check would be a great help to the laboring classes. With such a claim I offer them as one of the proofs to support my assertion No. 1.

I will now state my reasons why I am not a Malthusian, or, in other words, why I consider it absurd to propose limitation of offspring as a solution of the labor question.

The foregoing argumentation is perfectly logical and indisputable, and the conclusions drawn from it in regard to the equalizing effect of "supply and demand" would also be correct if the evident presumption, "free competition," were not a fatal delusion. Every logical thinker will promptly ad-

mit that free competition is absolutely necessary to bring about a satisfactory effect through equalization by supply and demand, and a serious study of sociology will show that there is no such thing as free competition in any "civilized" nation of the world, and never will be so long as the blind superstition of the masses gives to the few a great number of extraordinary privileges and advantages

If this should not be sufficient to convince the Malthusians, I would remind them of the fact that even the most sanguine of their number will have to admit that theirs is an extremely *slow* process. Unfortunately, our economic affairs have already reached such a critical condition that we will hardly be patient enough to be satisfied with an "equalizing medium" which requires at least half a century to show any remarkable beneficent results. I think we will have to take a somewhat stronger medicine.

So much for the preventive check in itself. I will now try to show the influence of sexual freedom upon social conditions in general, and will begin with the most unfortunate class:

In the so-called "slum-districts" of every large city you can find a number of human beings who are very prolific and of whose progeny we must say that their unfortunate heredity, training, and education makes them unfit even for the lowest of the "honest vocations," so that we cannot reasonably expect them to become anything but embittered enemies of human society. We hear a great deal of the noble work of charity performed by courageous men and women who enter these districts to relieve

the suffering of their fellow-beings. The majority of these philanthropists simply ignore this "submerged tenth" as "undeserving" and the others keep them from starving just long enough to increase. Suppose now that free men and women should undertake the work of charity in these districts. They would give to every woman there the information and the means necessary to enjoy sexual intercourse without incurring maternal duties. They would not care to discriminate between the "deserving" and the "undeserving," nor between the "moral" and the "immoral." It would be a truly charitable act and would at the same time help a great deal in bringing about better social conditions.

But the impatient reformer simply declares this to be but a miserable palliative, and says that we must change the entire system so that there will be no more "slum-districts." I heartily agree with him, but I hope that he will not claim that the increase of this most unfortunate class is conducive to that end, but will see that its decrease must be of great assistance in the work of social regeneration.

Whatever his theory of reform may be, he will tell us that we must look to that great body, the laboring class, the wage-earners, to put it into execution. Therefore, I will now try to show how sexual freedom will assist this class in their evolutionary or revolutionary work. Suppose that a large body of laborers in one of our great industrial centers resolves to take some definite action against

the unjust and cruel conditions under which they suffer. What are the main requisites to secure them success? Buoyancy of spirit, courage and perseverance, a joyful willingness to bring some sacrifice to the noble cause, confidence in their comrades, intimate co-operation, solidarity! I claim that sexual freedom will give them all of this, and that an absurd love-ideal, a false morality, and sexual slavery, make this utterly impossible to-day. I have repeatedly called the attention of the reader to the fact that our horrible sexual conditions are seriously endangering the noblest qualities in man, and that nothing is more liable to inspire a man with stanch courage, the power of resistance, and with that buoyancy of spirit which makes him long to do grand and noble deeds than a healthy and happy sex-life. What have the laborers to boast of in this respect? I am well aware that healthy physical exercise kept a great many of them in the days of childhood and early youth from the morbid phantasies and malpractices which cause so much prematurity and weakness in the "lowest" as well as the "most refined" classes; I am well aware that the so-called laboring class can show up comparatively more sexually healthy young men than any other class—but what does this mean? It means that when the young fellow, the sturdy workman of twenty or twenty-one, has finished his daily task, he wants a woman and he will have a woman. Where does he find her? He may go to the prostitute and lose his hard-earned money and his self-respect; he may "seduce" an unfortunate female comrade

(who has also retained her sexual health and hence feels the same strong, natural impulse) and be forced to lying and desertion, or he may be too noble a fellow for either course of action and so, loving a sweet young girl (who generally happens to be as poor as he is), he makes up his mind to be true to his darling. In this latter case you will have a chance to observe the ennobling influence of love—but, alas! it will not last long. If the lovers have been “sinning,” then a prompt marriage will soon be necessary to “save the honor of the woman,” and if they are strictly “virtuous,” then they cannot stand a long engagement (which seems so easy in the “respectable middle class”); they are too healthy for that. They are in a hurry to be united and so soon as they have scraped together a few dollars the marriage takes place. And what then? They sleep together! and they now get such a thorough satisfaction of their desires that that alone would be sufficient to take all of the high-spirited buoyancy out of them if there were not plenty of other reasons. Before he got married the young man had lived quite comfortably on his \$1.00, \$1.50, or \$2.00 a day and he always had a little saved up for an eventual “lay-off.” Of course he had to give his beloved as good a home as he possibly could and to do this had to borrow a little money from his friends, and now he is always in a pinch. His wife is always worrying and trying to save up a little money for the baby which is soon to come, and the prospect which she sees before her is pregnancy—baby—nursing, pregnancy—baby—

nursing in endless succession, and work, work every day from morning until night. And with all this is the constant fear that her husband may "lose his job" (which is so extremely liable to happen to the best and most able wage-earners at present). The two are yet true loving comrades, but for some reason or another their chats with each other are not so jolly as they used to be and always turn to sad and gloomy subjects. In short, the poesy of life is gone and the dreary, endless prose has begun. And if the man hears of the new ideas, the practicalization of which promise better conditions, if the consciousness of great injustice has stirred within him the necessary enthusiasm for courageous resistance and energetic action in harmony with his fellow-laborers—then one look at his suffering wife, at his helpless babes, will often suffice to make him bow humbly and submissively as before to the dictates of his "master." Do you doubt this? Then let me tell you that the owners of large manufacturing establishments knew it long ago; they are well aware of the fact that the institution of marriage has a great financial value for them.

I ask you again: Where will you get the men to fight courageously and energetically for a cause while such conditions exist?

But this is not all. What about the friendship, the comradeship-feeling among the laborers? Does not jealousy and the strife for the possession of a woman again and again cause animosity and bitter hatred among them? and—what is far more important yet—does not the fact that they divide

themselves into small circles (families) for their exclusive love, with hardly any connecting links between them except, perhaps, practical business-co-operation, and the further fact that a foolish love-ideal necessitates the placing of high and wide barriers between these many little circles, make an intimate co-operation, a real solidarity, absolutely impossible?

And another point: What about the influence of women in the struggle for freedom and better conditions? The prostitute has only an ironical smile for your hopes and aspirations; for the "sweetheart" there is but one end to work for, union with her lover, the saving of the necessary money for a home and family; the wife thinks only of her hungry children and the babe in her womb, and the others are not near enough to you to have any particular influence whatever.

Again I ask you, men: How can you expect ever to be successful in your work of reform while the influence of women (which must forever have a mighty effect upon you), instead of being strengthening, is decidedly weakening?

Let us now suppose that a number of male and female laborers in a large manufacturing place are free men and women. Undeniably, they would have one great advantage—whether they are fairly well situated or deplorably poor, they can always enjoy love, the genuine thing to the full extent. After their day's labor is ended the men will have a chance for an intimate, free, and unrestrained social intercourse with sympathetic, respectable, and

self-respecting women; in large groups, boys and girls, men and women, young and old, they will go out together to have a "jolly good time," or they will call upon each other for friendly private chats in their snug little "boudoirs," and everywhere they will be filled with the glad conviction that there is at least one beautiful thing in this world, which is a constant source of joys and pleasures, of which all the tyrants in the world cannot deprive them, which need not involve an economic question—which, in fact, need not cost a cent! And if the hale and hearty young laborer is craving for sexual pleasures he will find that the dear girls across the street have exactly the same desire, and that there is not a single reason to be found why either of them should suffer sexual hunger. All that is necessary for him to do is to constantly show himself such an excellent fellow that he will have a good chance of often being "first choice." If he is not satisfied with his boarding place and one of his best friends feels rather lonely in her fifth story room in the rickety tenement-building where she is surrounded by uncongenial neighbors, the two may resolve to rent a suit of rooms instead of the two separated ones and establish a little joint home and household. The woman, instead of getting meals for one as heretofore, now prepares them for two and instead of keeping one room tidy now attends to three or four. For this extra work the man will gladly pay the amount of his former board-money and considerably more even when he can afford it. This means for the woman an in-

creased income or a shorter day's work at her former occupation. There is no reason though why the two should make this a long-time contract or agreement. If at any time they find that it does not pay or that the benefits gained are not worth the extra cost, they can easily settle up and dissolve the partnership. Remember that this living together has not the meaning which it has to-day. The fact that the partnership exists, does not of itself show that they love each other, and the fact that it is dissolved by no means indicates that love has ceased. After their little household is given up they may be as jolly good friends as ever, who are not at all sorry that they have tried the interesting experiment. If, however, the experiment has proved a success, if the near neighborhood has strengthened their friendship and if this association of interests, this first little business partnership, has increased their trust and confidence in each other, then a firm and solid comradeship-contract for life may be the result. Their New Love-Ideal will safely guard them however against making any sexual- or love-contract or of ever excluding themselves from any love or sympathy which any outsider may have to offer them. Wherever you meet them, be it in their cozy home, at a public meeting, or at a picnic or dance, you will never notice any label upon them.

“And will they have no babies?” I will promptly give the answer which I know my opponent expects from me: No! they will enjoy all kinds of love to the full extent of their capacity, but when it comes

to the sexual embrace they will use the preventive check.

And it seems to me that I heard a voice saying, "Anything more, my Lord?"

I suppose that Mrs. Waisbroker and many of her readers think that the little pamphlet, which bears the above interrogation as its title, gives us irrefutable arguments against the use of preventive checks. Remember, however, that all the arguments made therein refer only to the enslaved, superstitious woman and hence do not apply to our case. Mrs. Waisbroker asks: "Has not the miner's wife as good a right to be a mother as the wife of the millionaire?" Certainly she has, but this is not at all the question which we have to answer. It was answered long ago by the unanimous vote of all kinds and all classes of honest reformers. The problem which confronts us to-day and which we must solve now is this: Shall the toiling woman demand a safe guarantee for a decent support for herself and child *before* she has the baby, or shall she have the baby first and then go down upon her knees and humbly beg for a piece of bread to keep it from starving? I advise that she secure the guarantee first; I recommend the preventive check because without it the advice would be silly and useless, and I will add that I would rather see the woman a "striker" in this respect for her entire life than to have her subjected to the unjust and cruel humiliation under which she suffers to-day!

But our free women will have an excellent chance for prompt success in a strike of this kind.

In the "free society" of laborers the "new ideas" will spread like wild-fire, and they will there find conditions which will enable the people to act upon them. As explained in the foregoing, a single man and a single woman may find it to their mutual advantage to join forces in many respects. This will mean no more than a business partnership or the association of interests of friendship. Even the "conservative" knows that neither of these need be exclusive. Perceiving the advantages of the association and co-operation of two human beings, even the dullest of our free men and women will begin to think that the advantage for each individual might be increased by taking in a few more. Why not establish a joint home and household of a dozen men and a dozen women? Under the old system of marriage and sexual possession, under the reign of the old love-ideal, "co-operative homes" can never be a success, but I defy you to show me a single reason why they would not work well with free men and women, if you give them the one thing which they must and will have—one room for each individual in which he or she is the exclusive master. But there are a thousand other aims and aspirations in which association and co-operation would bring great advantage to each and every individual. Ninety-nine out of a hundred of all the laborers of to-day who have taken up any of the "new ideas," are well aware of this, but, as I have already explained, they cannot act upon their convictions, because they are afraid of each other! Where free men and women see any advantage in

co-operating, they will promptly do so. They will not calculate upon any "altruism" in their comrades, but they will have perfect faith and confidence in them, because they feel that each one of them cannot work in any better way for his own happiness than by helping the general cause; they will feel safe and secure because of that general sense of "solidarity," which is an impossibility wherever they divide up into a number of small exclusive love-circles, (marriages, "love-relations," "free unions," etc.) of which each has its distinctly separated aims and aspirations. And how about that comradeship-contract? Will they not perceive very soon that the more it is extended, the more persons it includes, the less it will enslave and the more surely it will guarantee their comfort and safety? And will they not finally reach the conviction that after it includes an entire nation or, better yet, the entire world, it will bring an absolute economic independence to each and every human being without any noticeable sacrifice of personal liberty?

In regard to the children-question, I will say that we may expect that at the time of the establishment of the "free society of laborers" there will be a good many children amongst them. The first care of the society will be to see to it that not a single one of these shall suffer want and so long as this is not an easy matter they will not think of increasing the number. But they will gradually become conscious of the great power which unity gives them and they will be asking for a great

many things, and also for more babies—that is, not merely babies, but for babies with pretty clothes, good food, and first class surroundings, and they will soon have all these things too.

And how about the influence of the women? Does it require any further argument to convince you that it could never be weakening, that it would always be decidedly strengthening? Under the present circumstances the man, who is filled with nothing but a selfish greed for money, who bows submissively to every dictate of his master in order to retain his position and obtain a little extra reward here and there, has by far the best chance to gain, if not the love, then at least the possession of a good and respectable woman. That would not be the way to secure the love of a free woman. You may rest assured that that man will be the “pet” of the free women who acts most nobly and most magnanimously for the general welfare, for the general cause. To-day such a man may also receive the admiration, the praise, yes, even the secret love of the fair sex, but when he desires to find enjoyment, rest, and new inspiration at the bosom of a beloved woman, the “practical” fellow has carried off the bride, because he is better equipped to support a family. And if he has a family of his own already, who can blame the wife, if she has nothing but laments and reproaches for his actions, if she chides and derides him for neglecting his own children for the benefit of the children of humanity in general?

And again I tell you : Give up this foolish hope

that the world may be redeemed by the self-sacrifice and self-abnegation of fanatic cranks. Free yourselves from superstition and you will soon find that each one of you is fully qualified for noble actions and that the noblest deeds bring the greatest happiness.

* * *

In the discussions on this subject I have heard some very queer objections. Several men have made the assertion in good earnest, that if we would give the laborer a happy love-life he would be so contented in his humble position that he would not care to strive for any more, and, furthermore, that our only hope consists in the condition of the laboring classes being made so miserable that despair will finally fire them with the courage for violent action!

In regard to the latter assertion, I will say that this world will never be bettered by violent actions caused by the courage of despair. What we need is steadfast, persistent action and the courage of buoyant and hopeful enthusiasm. And to the first assertion I would answer that in my estimation that capitalist came far nearer to the truth who said: "It would be all right, if I thought that they would be permanently satisfied with this increase, but experience has taught us that the more you give these damned fellows the more they want. Before these cursed 'reformers' imbued them with these horrible new ideas they were always contented and (here one of the most fallacious of all proverbs comes in extremely handy) 'the great-

est happiness is contentment.'” There is indeed a great deal of truth in this. So long as a man is thoroughly imbued with the feeling that he was born a slave he may be perfectly contented with the crust you fling to him; when he begins to think that he deserves a little better treatment, because he happens to be a human being, he will want some good bread and some butter on it, too; the better you treat him the more his intellectual capacity will increase; the more you give him, the more the consciousness of the importance of his own self will increase, and so it has finally come to pass that many a poor devil, who does not “own” an inch of this earth, who does not even own the suit he wears (as he is still in debt to the tailor for it) and who has just spent his last nickel, has the audacity to declare that because he is hard at work for ten hours of each working-day at an extremely useful task he is entitled, not only to a “good living,” but to a good fair average of all wordly goods. And the queerest part about it is that it is an extremely difficult task to find a single valid argument in disproof of such an “absurd claim!”

Do not be afraid that our free men and women will be too contented. In fact, they will not crave for contentment at all; they will wish to awake every morning filled with a thousand different desires, so that they will stand a good chance of having some of them gratified during the day and have plenty of them left for the work of the morrow. They will know that it is not contentment but the satisfaction of a desire which gives us pleasure;

that therefore it is desire and not the absence of desire which is necessary for true happiness. Do not talk to me of the unhappiness caused by disappointment! Only the fool will moan and lament over "bygones" or crave the impossible, and where there is a possibility there is hope, and courageous and high-spirited free men and women are just the ones to make good use of their possibilities.

Disappointment causes such intense and persistent misery because in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the object sought is not lost and forgotten, but remains constantly in view, guarded by terrible ghosts and phantoms which frighten you into belief in the impossibility of attainment. If two men are passionately in love with one woman, the disappointment may well "break the heart" of the vanquished suitor—not because of the disappointment in the desire of the present, but because for this unhappy superstitious man this one defeat means that he must forever abstain from any similar desires. Suppose the same case in a free society, and the disappointment will in a few hours refer to a perfectly settled bygone matter while the future appears, as ever, full of hopes and possibilities. Follow up this trend of thought into the realm of the "economic," and you may get some idea of the possibilities of the "free society of laborers."

I do not think that a single person has ever studied the so-called social question without being struck by the terrible injustice of our economic conditions, the pernicious influence upon the general welfare and happiness, and the extreme necessity

for a radical change. Why is it then, that, in spite of the energetic efforts of thousands of intelligent men and women to rouse the masses from their lethargy, the great majority are still indifferent and conservative? Why is it that of all those persons who would have the greatest power of doing good in this respect (*i. e.*, the wealthy class) scarcely one seems to be able to see the point? Is it that the standard of intellectual capacity of all these people is so low that they cannot understand the plain arguments of common sense? Certainly not. My answer is the same as the one given to the question: Why is religion still such an important factor in our society, despite the fact that true religiousness has become an extremely scarce article? Another little proverb comes in handy here, "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." I would say, however, "Where ignorance is bliss, it is in fact the highest wisdom." I consider it far more expedient therefore to investigate the quality of their supposed bliss than to argue the point of justice or truth in the respective cases. And in both instances the result for me must be either that they are happy and wise, or that they are unhappy because they are fools!

Almost every one of the ardent agitators for true liberty of whom I have ever read or heard is extremely liable to fall into the fatal error of treating the social question as if it were nothing but an economic problem. Again and again he will tell us of the suffering poor and the rich man reveling in joys and pleasures; again and again he will de-

nounce the latter as a thief and a robber and demand a more equal distribution of worldly goods—for *justice's* sake!

And the rich man stops up his ears and thinks, "Where injustice is bliss, 'tis folly to be just." These "reformers" wish to take away his "bliss" and divide it up so that he will receive but a small share of it. His good friends, "wise and intelligent judges," tell him that these men are thieves and robbers and the latter say that he is a thief and a robber. Why should he seriously study the social question?

And the "bourgeois", the "respectable middle-class," the little tradesman, the shop-keeper, who still bends over his account-books long after his "laborers" have gone to rest or to enjoyment? Where is his "bliss?" Why, he has some "property" and some "chances;" a few favorable conjunctures, a few successful speculations, may bring him "great bliss" yet, while the laborer is "worth nothing" and has no chances! Talk to him of injustice toward the laboring class! He used to work for \$6.00 a month and save three of them! The laborers of to-day think too much of pleasure and enjoyment. If they would think only of their work and always save as much as possible of their wages they would all have a "chance." And if you ask him: "Who would perform your hard manual labor, your disagreeable work then?" he will promptly answer: "There will always be plenty of fools and spend-thrifts who do not deserve a better lot; they will have to stick to this work while wise men prosper." And if you tell of the good times to come when we

will all ride in fine carriages and take it easy, he is shrewd enough to know that he will be dead before we can reach that condition.

I would advise our noble agitators for liberty to pay a little less attention to the question of justice and injustice and devote more time to the study and the criticism of that "bliss" which is retained by means of *voluntary* ignorance. It would show that the joys and the pleasures of the millionaire are not as they appear to the hungry tramp at his gate, that ninety-nine per cent. of the happiness of the rich exists only in the imagination of the poor, that there is comparatively as much genuine joy, as much true happiness, to be found in the laboring class as in any other class of human society, that, in fact, we are all unhappy *because we are fools!*

Then the struggle for better conditions will not mean the rich against the poor nor capital against labor, but it will consist in the fight of libertarians against tyrants, of wise, enlightened men and women against superstitious fools—and we will find some of both kinds in every class, from the poorest proletarians to the "upper ten."

It is just as important and just as promising for the millionaire and the "middle class" to thoroughly investigate all social conditions and devote some serious study to the question "How to live a happier life" as it is for the so-called proletarians. If you have not reached the conviction that a free society (for once I will use the term in the real, the broader sense) would offer fully as much advant-

age to the former as to the latter, you do not yet know the value of your own theory and hence cannot expect others to give it the appreciation which it deserves.

Pay a little more attention to the questions of love, marriage and sexual intercourse and it may help you to reach a more rational conviction. In this sphere you will perceive at once that the rich suffer as severely as the poor.

Your theory for a better distribution of worldly wealth may be just and wise and good, but where are the men who are entitled to hold the scale of justice for their fellow-beings? Drive away the dark fog of superstition, through which every comrade and fellow-sufferer appears to you as a dangerous foe with whom you must fight forever for every thing that gives you pleasure, then Love with a bright smile upon her face may calmly wipe out many a complicated example of "Mine and Thine" which now troubles your brain.

We want freedom in love *first*, because it affords a chance for successful action and for an immediate increase of their happiness even to the small number of pioneers; because it will bring influential comrades to the rank of the libertarians, who could not be gained through the call for economic justice, and last though not least, we want freedom of love first because it will inspire us with the necessary courage and hopeful buoyancy to fight the spirit of Cæsar!

XXVI.

The Propaganda.

I HAVE said that we should begin with the agitation for freedom in love because this sphere offers even to the few a chance for immediate action, in which the most promising efforts for the increase of our own well-being and happiness will be equivalent to and consist in the same deeds as the most beneficent work for the cause in general. Why this cannot be said of the economic question is easily explained. In our economic relations (*i. e.*, in our efforts for the satisfaction of our material wants) we are dependent upon an entire nation, yes, upon the entire world and the commercial system now in existence. Hence, for any satisfactory improvement thereof we require a great number, powerful enough to overthrow the existing system or strong enough at least to make a somewhat fair bargain with the outside world. If but a comparatively small number have agreed upon a better system and wish to act upon their convictions, they will promptly find that it is an extremely difficult task to *exclude* themselves from this grand

mechanism, the existing system of production and exchange, to which we all have become so thoroughly accustomed, and that even a partial exclusion from it requires a considerable sacrifice of material welfare.

The conditions are exactly the reverse in the realm of love. Here, under the old régime, you were dependent upon but *one* human being, and your entire "relations" (if you had any whatever) referred only to an extremely small circle. Here you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Here the change from the old to the new means a transition from exclusiveness to inclusiveness, an expansion from the most narrow inclosures to unlimited opportunity. Here theory inspires to action, conviction means deeds. Suppose 100 men and women in a city of 100,000 inhabitants have found themselves united in the enthusiasm for liberty and are unanimously in favor of a certain new economic system. With glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes they crowd around the "wise men" in their midst and cry out: "Here we are, ready to fight for the noble cause. What shall we do?" What answer can be given them. Start a co-operative factory? A good idea, if it were not for the fact that they belong to a dozen different branches of industry and that the entire available cash does not amount to \$2,000. Go west and start a co-operative farm? An excellent idea, if it were not for two things, the trouble with "wives and sweethearts", and homesickness for the big city! Revolt, "expropriation"? A rather risky experiment for 100 against 100,000!

And so there is nothing left but to say: Go out among your neighbors and friends and agitate and when we have a large number on our side we will act. Many have not the necessary eloquence, others become disappointed after the first failure, but quite a number heed the advice and sacrifice themselves to the work of education. They find a great deal of fanaticism in their way, but their arguments are so strong that they gain a comrade here and there. They meet again, they call the roll, and lo! there are again but 100! For every one whom they have gained one has retired from the field, disgusted with the eternal talking without acting, and the "wise men" withdraw despondingly into their lonely studies as embittered pessimists, who henceforth declare that the only hope is in the conditions becoming so unbearable that despair will finally make the poor devils fight.

Suppose now that these 100 men and women had accepted the new love-ideal and resolved to devote their first attention to the propaganda for freedom in love. They would then have a hundred ways for individual and united action.

Their first work would consist in clearly demonstrating to each other their position towards sexual possession, the new ideal, and the rest, and to furnish by *deed* such absolute proofs of their full emancipation from the old superstitions that a general and perfect confidence would be the result. Buoyed up by the healthy and happy love-life which this would assure them they would eagerly enter into the work of outside propaganda. They would

be successful in this because they could speak not only of the "golden time coming," but could show by example immediate advantage. Every one of those acute outbreaks of agony of which they heard, caused by the old terrible sexual conditions, would receive prompt attention and they will be able to offer speedy relief, as in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases of this kind the agony is merely due to ghosts and phantoms. And they would not lack occasion for such truly "charitable" work. In every city, in every village of the land there are youths who are nearly driven to despair in the labyrinth involving them; maidens who are hungering for love, but have no "suitors" or are too proud or too intelligent to accept the only one as a master; "fallen women" who have not yet lost all self-respect; "seduced" girls who want to drown their "shame" in the river; unhappy "marriage-cripples" who can discover no honorable way out of their dilemma; enslaved women who can see nothing in their future but eternal work, eternal misery; and deceived husbands who think that it requires a flood of blood to regain their "honor." As a rule our free men and women would confine their agitation (for the first years at least) to the ranks of the avowed Free-thinkers, as it is rather hard to consider two different worlds at the same time, but in extremely sad cases even the fanatic orthodox may prefer the solace in the reasoning of common sense to the useless prayers to his unmerciful God. As to the economic question, our friends will everywhere be confronted by it, and it will be utterly impossible

to neglect it in their propaganda. They will know, however, that this question cannot be perfectly settled "between ourselves" like the love-question, but they will also perceive more and more that its solution in a large "free society" will be far simpler than they had originally expected it to be.

After a free society, no matter how small, is firmly established, it will everywhere find so much occasion for active propaganda-work that any further suggestions seem unnecessary at present. It is important, however, to call attention to the fact that the greatest, the redeeming action consists in the establishing of the free society itself, or, more correctly speaking, in the emancipating act of each individual, by which the qualification for membership is clearly demonstrated. Society! Membership! that at once brings the thought of solemn rites and oaths, parliamentary organization, rules and regulations, constitution and by-laws, and duties of officers and members, but ours is a queer society; it has nothing of all this. By becoming a member of this society you do not incur the slightest duty or obligation, it means neither more nor less than that the others *know* you to be a free man, or a free woman. To be this you must have fully accepted the new love-ideal and therefore must be firmly resolved never to enter into any love or sexual contract, but must desire to have it understood that, whatever other contract or agreement may bind you to a certain man or woman or a number of persons, you will never be labeled as a love-possession. A simple declaration

to this effect might seem sufficient, but after such is given every member will expect deeds as a proof, and if these do not follow it will be presumed that yours is but a belief, not a conviction. It is yet a very new and an extremely revolutionary idea with which we have to deal and your firm conviction and the perfect confidence of the others in your full emancipation are absolutely necessary in order to bring out the benefits potential in a free society. We have heard too often of a man or women ridiculing ghosts one hour and trembling in fear of them the next, to rely upon mere assertions in such an important matter. In what then should this great redeeming, guaranteeing, act consist? As we all know that the entire constraint in love hinges upon the superstitions in regard to sexual intercourse, the thought will naturally present itself that it should consist in variety in your sexual acts and its proud and open acknowledgment. I will frankly admit that in my German treatise I asked for this as the only sufficient proof of which I could conceive at the time. However, very grave objections to this plan have finally caused me to reject it altogether. In the first place, you may not desire any sexual intercourse whatever or you may be temporarily or permanently unfit for it (remember that only the superstitious, non-free man or woman would declare that that disqualifies you for love, and that for a free person you may have, in spite of this, an immense value as a greatly appreciated and beloved comrade or lover) or you may be so constituted that only a few

exceptional persons are able to arouse your sexual desire. To these objections we might still answer that the cause is grand and important enough to be worth some great sacrifice, but there are other reasons which compel us to reject the plan. It is inconsistent with our declaration that we consider it extremely vulgar, unwise, and inexpedient to give any notice to the public of the fact that we intend to enjoy or have enjoyed the sexual embrace of any person. Of course, where such information is not given the act would be no demonstration whatever, nor a proof, except probably for a few intimate friends; in fact, it would be no more than what millions of men and women have done who are very far from being free. When I arrived at this conclusion, I felt at a loss for some time, until an idea struck me which is so extremely simple and such a perfect solution of the question that it seems ludicrous that I did not think of it before. What we should prove is by no means that we are varietists in our sex-acts, but simply this, that we deny the right of any one person or any number of persons to manage or control our love- and sex-life; that we have reached a condition in which such control or supervision is utterly impossible to Church and State, friend and foe, and to lover, mate, or partner as well, and that we are free at all times to enjoy any complement of our own natures in any man, woman, or child. To prove this it is only necessary to provide the opportunity and to show its frequent and unrestrained use. As stated before, every free individual has his or her own

bed-room. This gives the opportunity, the intelligent use of which will liberate the world from the worst curse ever placed upon humankind. Men and women will come together for a serious, intelligent, unprejudiced discussion of the Love- and Sex-Questions. After due consideration they reach that firm conviction which makes them long for action, and then the importance of this opportunity will at once impress itself upon their minds. Again and again the woman will use the slightest pretext for a demonstrating action until she feels that her own emancipation and the confidence of the members in it are firmly established. That is, openly and as unconcernedly as possible, witnessed by members and outsiders, she will invite a sympathetic man to her bed-room and take due care that during the time of the interview neither Mrs. Grundy or the purity-crank nor her best friend and partner has any chance for invasion or supervision. A very simple act—and yet it is bound to strike the death-blow to woman's enslavement and man's treachery and deceit in love. This withdrawal may cover any kind of private interview from a mere business talk to the most intimate physical union ; what it is the world does not know and has no right to know, and as a demonstration of your personal liberty the first extreme has exactly the same value as the last, seeing that you had a chance for either without causing any difference in your position towards society. Imagine the disappointment and irritation of Mrs. Grundy, who, through laborious exertion and the co-opera-

tion of a half a dozen hired girls, has finally brought to light the terribly scandalous fact that Mrs. X entertained a gentleman in her bed-room from 9 to 11 P. M. behind locked doors, and now is informed that that is no secret whatever, that the retirement was witnessed by a number of persons and that it referred to an interview with the solicitor about an important real-estate deal! She may say that she does not believe this, but after awhile she will be so completely nonplussed by these "cranky people" that she will give them up and let them alone—or perceive the wisdom in the "crankiness" and do likewise. You may feel very much inclined to cause the worthy moralists such a humiliation as often as possible, but beware of making it a rule as that would "incriminate" you whenever you could not say "No," and would again constitute a means of control. Whenever you are placed before any tribunal, be it Mrs. Grundy & Co., "moral reformers," or a so-called court of justice, there is but one correct course of action: Admit freely and openly the fact that you have enjoyed the company of a person of the opposite sex in a place where you had a chance for all kinds of "awful deeds," and add that you consider such privacy your inalienable right (even the most fanatic Comstockian will not dare dispute that). And if the question is asked whether the intercourse was "intimate," whatever may be the truth, answer neither "No" nor "Yes," but always, "None of your business!" Of course you may choose a little more polite phrase than this, but be sure to

nave it sound just as distinct and unmistakable.

Another thing which is necessary to make you "free," if you have any sexual desire whatever, is that you have a rational view of the sex-union itself as explained in another chapter of this book. If you still consider it such a terribly sacred act that one should meditate for a year and pray for a month before participating in it, or if you should hold to the other extreme and regard it as something low, mean, and vulgar, or be ashamed of it because it is "carnal"—in any case the view constitutes a very serious obstruction to that free development and cheerful manifestation of all your warmest and noblest feelings towards your fellow-beings which we desire to encourage. A free discussion of the subject will soon liberate you from such morbid views and a simple declaration to that effect will be perfectly sufficient.

After a number of individuals who have the opportunity for social intercourse with each other have thus established and proved their emancipation, the salutary influence upon the happiness of every member will promptly become apparent. To be with them will mean that you are in a society where the barriers to love and sympathy have been removed, where there is no obstacle to hinder you in the enjoyment of love except perhaps a lack of attractive power in yourself. Show your worth and you will find some one to appreciate it; look for some beautiful complement of yourself in every sympathetic person whom you meet, and you will

find it. It is an extremely easy matter to love, to gain love, and to enjoy love, where that does not mean to make a contract for mutual exclusive possession (body, soul and everything), and in which you must not take all the repellent qualities with the good! The free individual will say to you: "Love and enjoy whatever you find love-worthy within me; others may appreciate, yes, may need to complete a beautiful harmony much of me which is valueless for you, which, if forced upon you, would result in nothing but shrill discords.

The free discussion of that most important and most interesting of all subjects—love and sex-life—the different propositions for effective propaganda, the planning for aiding and assisting the sufferers about us, will tend to make our social intercourse extremely interesting. The 'piquant flavor,' which such subjects may have for the members in the beginning, will of course be gone very soon, but you will be repaid for that loss a thousandfold by genuine love and a healthy enjoyment of life.

The society will be no "secret society" in any way whatever. As a society it has nothing to hide from the public, but will ever invite investigation. It will not be exclusive, either. I cannot see any reason why it should not heartily welcome to its meetings any sympathetic person who desires to seriously study the questions there canvassed, even if he or she be yet a tightly bound and a superstitious person. I feel pretty sure that the barriers which such an individual would of course set around

her- or himself would be "respected" fully as much here as in conventional society. We will ever try to convince by argument and example, but the free man will be far less likely to "seduce" any one than the moralist, to whom it may appear as the only chance for a satisfactory gratification of his desire. The latter often becomes a "seducer" because he and his partner do not "know themselves;" thinking that the guard (their moral feeling) will be strong enough to protect them from "falling," they indulge a little in that enticing game, "playing with the fire," until, too late, they find that there are moments when even the severest moral training is not strong enough to guard them. The free man knows himself and, have he ever so passionate a nature, he also knows that no woman need ever become "dangerous" for him if he "puts on the brakes" in due time. He will know it is absolutely necessary to do so when a woman tells him that to love him means that she wants him exclusively as her love-object. I suppose that this appears "perfectly charming" to the average enamored man of to-day, but to a free man such a declaration will sound so shocking that he will not only respect the limit-lines of the lady in question, but will draw an extra line around his person for her. Let me tell you, dear readers, that after men and women have once fully realized the beauty of freedom they will look upon the old love-ideal as one of the most horrible thoughts which ever entered into human minds.

Rather late I think of a point which is of no

little importance: We must have some new and appropriate names. The terms free society, free men and women, and the others, will do well enough in a single treatise of this kind where you can explain at the beginning in what sense they will be employed, but for general use they would be inadequate and misleading. I have racked my brains to invent a beautiful, appropriate, and suggestive terminology, but in vain; so I have finally decided to accept the terms, New-Idealism, New-Idealist, and New-Ideal-Society, seeing that it is the acceptance of the new love-ideal which demonstrates most distinctly our position towards the marriage-question. I fear that some readers may think that it sounds rather silly, because the word idealist means for many about the same as "vague illusionist," while we intend to be extremely practical, but, having no better terms at my command, I will use them henceforth in all discussions of the subject until an abler mind suggests more appropriate names.

As I intimated before, I have completely changed my opinion in regard to the advisability of legal marriage. In my German book I recommended it in cases where a couple have made a comradeship-contract for life and desire to establish a joint home and a family. I advised them to choose the simplest legal form and to have it perfectly understood between themselves that this is not to mean any such an absurdity as a love-contract nor any sexual agreement (which would mean a degradation), but that it shall signify only that part of

the legal provisions which pertains to the economic, as concerns mutual aid and assistance, and their relation toward each other and toward their children in regard to inheritance. The statute laws of course contain many articles relating to the sexual contract involved in marriage, but not one of them can gain any particular significance except through the action or suit of one of the parties to the contract, which would be impossible, however, after a mutual agreement between the parties as described had been effected and acted upon.

My reasons for such advice were as follows:

1. It is the simplest manner of legalizing the intended economic relation and, what is more important, of securing such right of inheritance for each party interested as would naturally be desired.

2. The security thus obtained may strengthen the parties for courageous action.

3. The divorce-laws would interest us but very little, as ninety-nine per cent. of all the reasons which to the superstitious may make divorce appear desirable do not exist in such a union.

4. It need not bind their freedom in love in any way, but may be of use, especially in places where they stand entirely alone, as a partial means of prevention of molestation and attack by the superstitious neighbors.

My reasons for changing my opinion are these:

1. The fact that this operation is so extremely simple makes it extremely dangerous. Any one of the economic relations which you may desire, from

the support of a child to the right of inheritance, can be made equally binding without the marriage contract. The fact that the procedure is more complicated when a separate contract or deed must be made for each one of the different relations, is not a disadvantage but an advantage. Each point will be specially considered, every agreement will be made to suit the particular circumstances, and this is of great importance. If it remains the rule to use the marriage ceremony for the family contract, it may result in many hasty, inconsiderate actions and great injustice.

2. The laws of many states of the Union still place the married woman at such an unfair economic disadvantage that that is sufficient reason to reject the marriage ceremony under all circumstances.

3. Separate contracts afford the same security, and if any mistake is found in them later on they can be easily changed or annulled.

4. We have good reason to hope in regard to the economic relations that the transition from the narrow limits of the family to the comradeship-contract of the entire society will be far more rapid than was formerly considered possible. To encourage legal marriage might seriously retard this evolution.

5. As to your relation to Mrs. Grundy & Co., the advantages supposed to be gained are more imaginary than real. Legal marriage will of course make your position somewhat easier in the beginning, but you will have to pay for it in the end. If

you use the advantages you will not achieve your full emancipation, and if you finally defy the institution altogether (as you certainly will), you will be criticized all the more severely for having “disgraced” their holy marriage sacrament. Consistent action is and always will be the most apt to gain for you the respect of your opponents.

This statement of both positions gives the reader a chance to judge for himself, but I think that he will agree with me that in order to act in the most practical, the most consistent, and the wisest manner we should beware, as much as possible, of any actions which might be looked upon as compromises indicating weakness!

I do not advise legal marriage, but I have even less to say in favor of legal divorce. I oppose the former farce because the little advantages are not worth the compromise, and I reject the latter farce (which is generally far more humiliating and far more expensive than the former) because in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it will bring no advantages whatever. This of course refers only to persons who have freed themselves from superstition.

New-Idealists who were legally married before they became enlightened will not bother about the divorce laws. Their aim will simply be to get rid of the “label,” *i. e.*, to prove their emancipation, and that will of course require exactly the same acts as in the case of unmarried persons. They will neglect the parlor for some time and fix up a cozy little “boudoir” for each of them, which our poet, J. Wm. Lloyd, thus describes: “The palace and temple of

the individual; the sanitary bit of solitude in which he finds healthful balance against the weight of society, and opportunity to become acquainted with himself; the studio in which he worships his Ideal Self, chips and chisels his personality, and paints himself on the wall—his eyrie, his refuge, his repose, his kingdom. In other words, his home is an invention to benefit and develop himself.—No matter how much commerce and travel there may be between the home of a man and the home of a woman,—and I care not how much—the two homes should be as separate as the two physical individuals. All the charm, the surprise, the humor, the picturesqueness, the progress, of life depend upon the evolution, preservation and emphasis of individualities.”

This is a part of a dream of the future, which may thus be briefly outlined: Human society one great household, through the co-operation of free individuals, each and every one of whom has his own individual, exclusive little home—as his eyrie, his refuge, his repose, his kingdom! This accords wonderfully with my dreams. But how can we turn them into reality? Such co-operation, in order to have any value whatever, must be voluntary. Does any sane man hope that this can ever be possible under the reign of the old love-ideal? We have our little household of one man and one woman and we still feel that we need it. Let us begin then by rejecting at least that horribly idiotic idea that these two should be but the halves of one individual, that “they twain shall be one flesh”! Let us begin by making it at least the voluntary co-

operation of two spheres, two independent individuals; let these become thoroughly permeated with the grandeur and beauty of the New Ideal and, sooner and wider than even our poet expects it, the small circle will expand!

After this rather long digression, I will return to my subject, the newly enlightened married couple. The new ideas may affect their relations towards each other in many ways, but they will not encourage them to seek legal divorce. If they were fairly good comrades before, they will be better comrades ever after. If they used to consider themselves a "happy couple," they will soon say, "before this we did not know what true happiness was." If formerly they were convinced that they were "a bad match," an "unhappy couple," they will find in most cases that sexual freedom and the acceptance of the New Love-Ideal have made them excellent mates. But even in those cases where they still perceive that they are not adapted for partnership, the divorce-court will be about the worst tribunal to which to appeal for a settlement of their affairs. What they need is not divorce (for they do not care to marry again) but a rational and practical rearrangement of their economic affairs. If they cannot settle this between themselves (which is always best) they will certainly not call upon the superstitious legalists for advice and verdict, but will choose judge and jury from among the friends in whose judgment they have some confidence. Consistent with their ideal, they will of course examine each relation by

itself, and generally they will perceive that the "sore points" are confined to one or two of them, while in other relations they are well adapted for co-operation and a truly beautiful comradeship. They will dissolve those associations which are detrimental to their happiness and remain united in those which are still beneficial or where the dissolution would not be possible without causing more suffering than benefits (as for example, the united interest in children). An immense amount of misery is caused to-day by the foolish idea that, when it comes to the relations of a man with a woman, it must always be "everything or nothing."

The case will of course be more complicated and difficult where only one of the parties has become a New-Idealist, while the other has not the necessary intelligence or the spiritual energy to accept the progressive thought. In each and every case of this kind a courageous, open "declaration of independence" is the best and wisest course of action, while deceit is the worst and the most dangerous. Under such conditions legal divorce might often appear necessary and would be advisable where it did not involve too great a sacrifice. The New-Idealist party should always take due care, however, to have it clearly understood that what he or she demands is simply emancipation from an extremely *immoral* and depraving contract and that the demand is not caused by any desire to choose another partner for such a contract. And furthermore, if there are any relations still existing be-

tween the couple in which the association of interests appears somewhat satisfactory, the New-Idealist should declare that, so far as he or she is concerned there need be no separation of these interests, if both parties can co-operate in them as in a partnership of free individuals.

I trust, dear reader, that I have succeeded this time in making clear the meaning of the new theory. I hope that you will fully understand that it does not merely show you a dream of a beautiful future for your children and grand-children, but that it is meant for you, for your happiness.

If it still seems to you that the proposed actions would be impossible to you, if you persist in the same old "philistine" way of living, then you have not yet grasped the grandeur and beauty of the new idea. Whoever you may be, the full perception of its beauty will cause a great change in your life and must inspire you with the necessary pride and courage.

Again I say: Conviction means deeds! And the deeds will mean, a fuller, a richer life, brighter hopes, and grander, nobler aims!

If you are still in the bloom of youth it will fill you with a thousand beautiful, happy dreams of the future, dreams which are not mere ludicrous fantasies and delusions, but which may become glorious actualities through vigorous, persistent, high-spirited endeavor. And if the snow is on your head, let me tell you that the enthusiasm of love is by no means a privilege of youth!

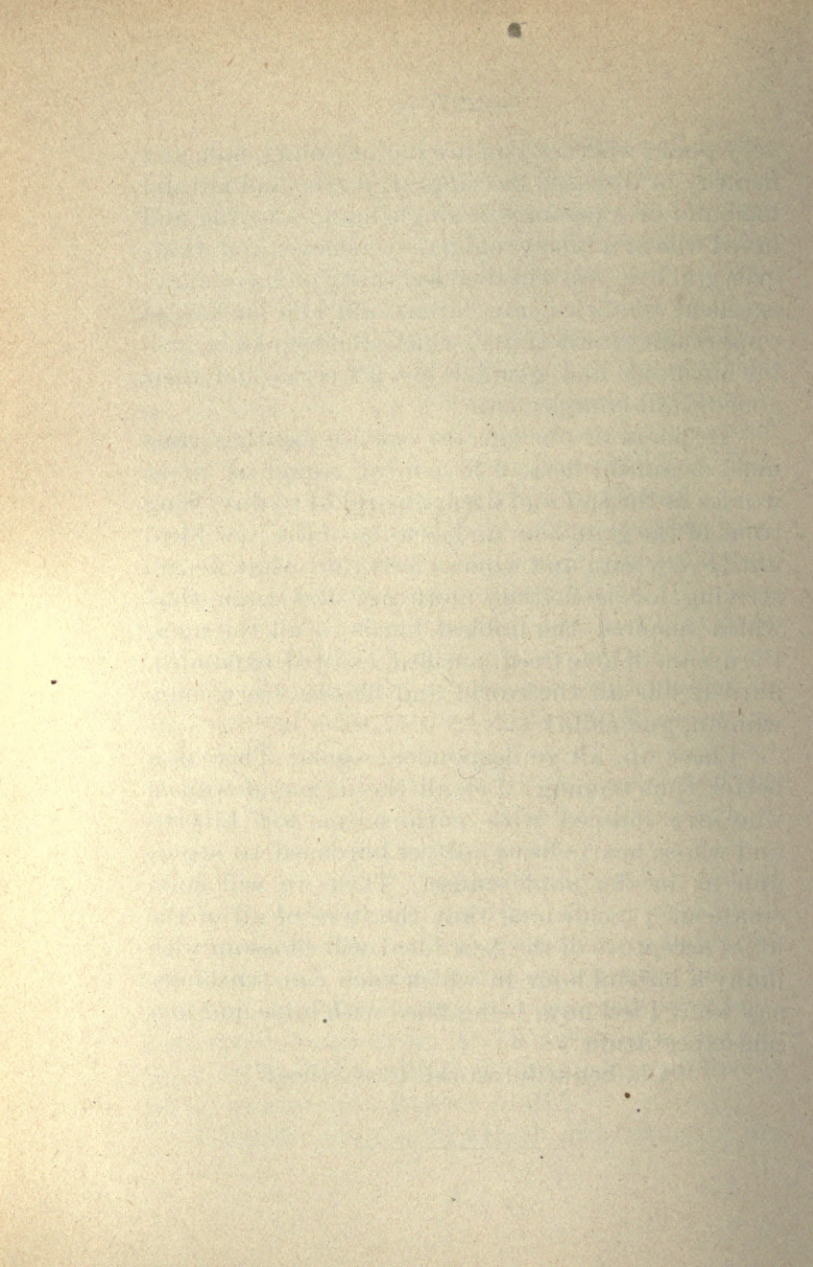
Whether you live in wealth and luxury or are

very poor; whether you are old or young, hale and healthy or diseased or crippled; a true and faithful husband or a pessimistic single man; a loving and loved wife or a lonely maiden—whichever and whatever you are, you will then feel that you have many excellent qualities, now latent and idle for lack of opportunity for activity, which could evoke beautiful harmony and genuine joy if free to find their concordant complements.

Ye poets of our age, do you not feel that your most beautiful lays of love must sound as bitter ironies in the sad and dreary world of to-day? Sing to us of the grandeur and beauty of the New Ideal until every man and woman feels that what we are striving for is neither more nor less than that which inspired the noblest bards of all the ages, the dream of love freed, purified, exalted, expanded, until it fills all the world and blesses every man, woman, and child!

Cheer up, all ye despondent souls! There is a better time coming! Let all the men and women who are imbued with enthusiasm for Liberty and whose hearts have not yet hardened to stone, join us in the noble cause. Then we will soon create such conditions that the lives of all of the loyal acceptors of the New Ideal will blossom with many a blissful hour in which each can truthfully say what I feel now, being filled with hope and joyous expectation:

“Oh, beautiful world, I love thee!”



Appendix.

NOTES

and

COMMENTS ON CRITICISMS.

I.

Introduction.

I HAVE decided to add to this treatise, without any attempt at classification, a number of short articles dealing with the criticisms of my German book or necessitated by the experiences and observations following its publication.

To all those readers who have become thoroughly disgusted by this time as well as to those who have remained indifferent or whose time is very valuable, I would say: Stop here, as what follows is not absolutely necessary for the full understanding of the theory.

To those, however, who are deeply interested in the new ideas but are still wavering and undecided, these articles may be of some little value. They may assist in dispelling the last mist of doubts and fears.

And to those who are imbued with enthusiasm for the cause, these comments and discussions may give some genuine pleasure and perhaps instruction.

II.

The Criticism of a "Leader."

QUITE a large number of periodicals and newspapers of this country and Germany have deemed my German treatise worthy of a "critique," but the great majority of them have confined themselves to comments upon the "descriptive" or "destructive" parts, and have simply alluded in a few commending or condemnatory words to what might be called the "constructive" parts. As I have intimated in the preface to this treatise, I would not be justified in ascribing this to lack of interest or of courage, but am forced to admit that it is due to the fact that I failed to make myself understood.

Of the few exceptions to the rule, those who have endeavored to understand the principles underlying the new theory, it certainly cannot be said that these inquirers have come any nearer to grasping their true meaning. I am not able, therefore, to offer you any translations of interesting newspaper discussions. In the beginning I did answer a few of the most aggressive articles, but I

soon grew tired of the constant correcting of misunderstandings.

I have concluded, however, to give you a synopsis of one of the longest of these latter critiques because it gives such a fine illustration of what ludicrously foolish things "wise men" will say and write when it comes to the questions of love and sexual intercourse. It appeared in "Der Freidenker" ("The Freethinker") of Milwaukee, Wis., and the writer is thought by many a "leader" in Free-thought.

In the introduction he says that many of my errors and shortcomings must be excused on account of my youth, inexperience, and my lack of knowledge of human nature, and that the resulting "*naivete*" is the one redeeming feature of the book.

As I am not very old yet and have already admitted so many errors and shortcomings, I cannot object to this and am forced to concede that I am not at all qualified to be a leader.

I must also admit that it was extremely *naive* on my part to expect free, unprejudiced thinking from a man, simply because he called himself a stanch Freethinker.

The first "great hit" of the critique is found in this extraordinary comment: "Although we do not dispute the justifiableness of a moderate and hence healthy sensuality, we do not see happiness only in sexual pleasures which know no barriers and to which all other relations which now influence happiness and unhappiness would appear of little or no significance. If such a view would ever

prevail it would prove degrading instead of ennobling for humanity, it would mean a lowering to the plane of the beast, the arrest of further progress, the ruin of civilization.” Then follows an approval of my views in regard to the education of children, and the statement that the writer is also in favor of giving the children truthful information in regard to the sexual functions as soon as they are able to intelligently comprehend the subject. “But,” he adds, “unrestrained gratification of the sexual impulse is not a command of nature. Generally they are mere sensualists who wish to demonstrate the necessity of sexual intercourse by calling it a ‘demand of nature.’”

When I read this I thought to myself: Is this stupidity, blind fanaticism, or is it the sophistry of a hypocrite? I was “*naïve*” enough to expect a prompt repudiation from the lips and pens of my Freethought friends. And what did I hear? “That’s right! There’s the weakness of your theory! Unrestrained sexual intercourse! Why, that’s simply horrible! and so on, *ad nauseam*. For a while I asked myself: Am I insane—or are the minds of all these people so thoroughly deranged that they cannot see into the simplest subject? Trying to solve this question, I found that the above exclamations were caused by the following wonderful logic:

“They want absolute liberty, they want to tear down all the barriers.

Hence they want unrestrained sexual intercourse.

Unrestrained sexual intercourse means licentiousness.

Licentiousness is an evil.

Therefore their theory is an evil!"

Two years ago I would have had nothing but a hearty laugh for such trick-logic. But since then I have grown older and wiser and have lost a great deal of my *naïve* confidence in the common sense of Freethinkers. Hence I will condescend to investigate. Suppose that I should ask my worthy critic to show me the barriers to licentiousness in our present civilization. Where are they? He is a great believer in the power of statute laws, so we will begin with these. I defy him to show me a single paragraph in any statute-book of this great Union which defines what should constitute a "moderate and hence healthy sensuality" or which decrees a punishment for sexual excess. All they say is this: Get your license, then you can have all you want, and if you have no license you shall have none whatever! And how about the moral laws? They say the same. And custom? Well, it is customary for men to pay no great attention to these laws, that is, after they have indulged in all kinds of irregularities in their youth and have finally become smart enough to perceive that secret bond existing between all men, and which means: "Do not betray me and I will not betray you!" And it is further customary to fling a few females over the barriers, which proceeding, if it does assure a "moderate and healthy" gratification of their sensuality to the men, means a rather

immoderate and unhealthy indulgence for those women. But we finally manage to drive most of them into that wonderful institution, marriage. Is that, then, a barrier to licentiousness? If so, it is certainly a very queer one. You make them hunger for many months and years for the satisfaction of their natural impulse, until they have finally settled the many necessary preliminaries; then you have a great feast, give the couple a bed in which they must henceforth sleep together, tell them that they now belong to each other, draw an impenetrable curtain around them and say; Another couple saved from licentiousness!" But, stop, there may be some reason in this! It may be claimed that it works somewhat like the Keeley-Cure, *i. e.*, you give them the craved-for thing in such big doses, mixed with a little nauseating substance, that they become so disgusted with it or at least so indifferent to it that after a little while they are not inclined to intemperance. This would do if it were not for the fact that there is such an immense difference in human beings in regard to their sex-natures that in nine cases out of ten what is no more than a "moderate and healthy" indulgence for one of the partners is a terrible excess for the other. And how about your education? Is there a single common school in this country in which the pupils get any idea whatever of what could be called a moderate and hence healthy sensuality? Or a high-school? Or a university even? Do your parents give to their grown-up sons and daughters the benefit of their experience in this as

in other matters? Do they teach them how to live a healthful and happy sex-life? And how about your physicians and reformers who make sexual hygiene their specialty? Do not great obstacles hinder them in the study of human sex-life? If they have gained valuable knowledge; do not many barriers prevent them from imparting it to others? And if in spite of all this the knowledge has reached a human being who needs it, will he not find other huge barriers confronting him and which make intelligent action according to his better understanding an impossibility?

Yes, there are many barriers, but they are not even claimed to be barriers to licentiousness.

Yes, we do want to tear down the barriers, but they happen to be dark walls which prevent healthy living and which bar you on all sides from love, while they conceal and protect a licentiousness as excessive and depraving as ever disgraced a human society. Clear the field; then liberty will remove the causes of the evil and secure the one and only restraint—knowledge—which can ever be of any use for this purpose.

Any person who, after considering these facts in regard to present "civilization" and studying the arguments in the chapter of this book treating of licentiousness will insist upon saying that sexual freedom would mean licentiousness, must be either an idiot or a hypocrite.

The one and only factor which has ever been pretended to be a barrier to sexual excess, is that part of the moral code, or rather of the moral edu-

cation, which characterizes the sex-act as nasty, dirty, and vulgar, with the hope that this may prove an effectual discouragement. Under the existing marriage-system this claim would be so absurd that even my critic has clearly and unmistakably rejected it.

After having proved that nature does not “demand” the gratification of the sexual impulse by a quotation from an authority (which is too silly to require any comment) he states that under the new theory woman would still be less free than man because she would always have to fear the consequences, unless, of course “even the school-girl should know all about the preventive check.” I suppose this contingency appears so horrible to him and his followers that it is perfectly sufficient to cause the rejection of the entire theory. A little unprejudiced thinking would soon convince them, however, that this horror is not founded upon reason but is simply the result of the rankest superstition.

My critic further says: “The entire book is written from the one-sided standpoint of a man, to whom sensuality appears as the highest craving for happiness, which should receive gratification by all means. Compared with this highest enjoyment, which of course lasts but a few minutes, all other things which make life beautiful and give value and substance to it would be deemed unworthy of consideration. The author had to come to this conclusion, the entire tendency of the book absolutely demanding it. That in spite of the un-

restrained sexual freedom the author wishes to retain marriage (for economic and spiritual co-operation and the family relation) is an inconsistency which betrays his *naivete* and lack of knowledge of human nature."

This insolence deserves a severe censure. Again and again I have called attention to the fact in my German, no less than in this, treatise, that we must strive for freedom in sexual relations because that is the pivotal point upon which the entire constraint in love is hinging. Again and again I have said and proved that sexual freedom will mean freedom in *all* love, that there are many other things besides the gratification of our physical desires in which woman is a beautiful counterpart of man, hence that there can be love, yes, even passionate love, without the desire for sexual intercourse, and that it is a pernicious custom which makes sexual service or sexual submission the inevitable duty resulting from any declaration of love. But there are some minds which have become so perverted and diseased, either through horrible licentiousness or through a morbid craving resulting from unnatural constraint, that it is utterly impossible for them to conceive of any "enjoyment of love" other than the gratification of their physical desires by a submissive slave. And, alas, my critic has proved only too clearly that he belongs with these unfortunate beings, for he says: "Marriage and unrestrained sexual freedom for husband and wife, these are two things which exclude each other. All that which gives a charm to home

and family life would be unmercifully destroyed thereby.”

This means, if it means anything, that any true friendship, any beautiful comradeship, any truly beneficent co-operation with a woman, would be impossible to him or at least would lose all charm for him if the woman were not his sexual possession. And this man has the audacity to call me a sensualist!

He further says: “The home would be transformed into a dove-house for fathers and sons, mothers and daughters.”

If I understand this aright, the writer wishes to say that he likes a quiet home and hates company. But this involves no difficulty whatever. He would have to choose a partner who had the same desire and they could then establish and enforce the rule that the parlor, the dining-room, the kitchen and whatever other rooms might belong to the joint estate, should be reserved for the exclusive use of the family or at least that all wooing and cooing should be strictly prohibited in these apartments. They could further see to it that their private rooms were so far apart that the special guests of his partner would not disturb the serene quietude of his study. And when the sons and daughters were grown up they could be requested to have their respective dove-cotes so far away that their cooing could not possibly disturb the peace of the parents! I, for my part, would enjoy it immensely, were my home to become such a dove-house. I would like nothing better than to

have my sons and daughters enjoy a great deal of their social intercourse with their friends in our parlor, where I could be among them as much as I pleased and retire to my "eyrie" whenever the talk became too silly for a wise old man; and as to the best friends of my "best friend," they would be just the ones whom I would like to meet in my home. There is and probably always will be a great difference in tastes, and a great advantage of the New-Ideal-Society consists in the fact, that there you will arrange your home according to your individual taste and not in deference to a tyrannical custom. We expect, of course, that you will finally prefer to have but a little sanctum of your own and have the parlor, yes, or even the dining-room, a place where all will be welcome, but that is a hope for the future which we do not expect to realize through any compulsion, but through the fervent desire of free individuals.

This gives the reader another example of the disagreeable results of the mistake made by retaining the word marriage. If I had not given the critic an opportunity to use this word for a certain union which still appears valuable to me, his arguments would have demonstrated so plainly the vulgarity of the writer that he would have thought twice before offering them to the public. As it is, he goes on to comment upon my great "inconsistency" in not rejecting marriage altogether.

I have rejected marriage (as the term is interpreted now) and have told him so in good plain German. The only inconsistency consisted in re-

taining a term which ought to be obnoxious to us. If the writer should claim that it is a contradiction to propose comradeship unions and economic agreements while rejecting sexual contracts, then I should be very anxious to hear his reasons for such an assertion.

The article concludes with the following quotation from Karl Heinzen:

“To flutter from flower to flower until the sweetest one is found is possible only to him who is educated for a butterfly, and yet even in this fluttering there is an apparent inconsistency. A butterfly nature does not go out to find the sweetest flower and remain with her; a humane nature however will consider that flower the sweetest which has gained its exclusive affection and admiration. But if it finds itself disappointed and if the honey becomes bitter, it is no more humane or wise, but unnatural and foolish, to try to sweeten it by faithfulness.”

Let us boldly accept the simile, although it is not perfectly appropriate. We are *real* butterfly-natures! We do not roam from flower to flower in order to secure the sweetest one as all our own, but, true to our nature, we endeavor to draw some honey from every flower that blooms in the garden of humanity, and we claim that this brings more happiness and less sorrow to the flowers as well as to the roamer. We may often find a pretty rose whose charms make her appear to us the “sweetest of them all,” so that temporarily we will be indif-

ferent to all the others, but in such a case we will not act as you would do. In your foolish greediness you build a dark wall around your rose to save all the nectar, all the fragrance and the beauty, for yourself forever. Very soon your flower begins to pale and to droop. She loses her fragrance and her beauty because she lacks the sunshine of freedom. But you have made your choice! Henceforth all other flowers bloom in vain for you. Coldly and indifferently you pass them by to go to your duty, your mate, your fate!

Others will transplant the rose into a darker, lonelier spot in the garden. They will devote themselves exclusively to drawing nectar from their cherished prize. After a while the "menu" appears rather monotonous; though yet sweet, it has become somewhat sickening, and finally it seems decidedly bitter. Then they will leave the rose and pay no more attention to it henceforth. They are ready for the next!

Yet others will simply break the rose, enjoy its fragrance for a few short moments, then ruthlessly throw it aside to be crushed by the feet of indifferent passers-by.

We have become too wise for either of these actions. We will enjoy our rose to our heart's content, but we will not try to gorge ourselves with the honey until it is turned into bitterness. We may softly cover it with our hands to enjoy its full fragrance for a blissful moment, but every time we will quickly release it to bloom as before in

the brightest sunshine and to remain for us as well as for our brethren “a thing of beauty and a joy forever.”*

* The simile is fairly appropriate until it comes to the New-Idealists. The free woman would probably like very well to be called the “prettiest rose,” but she might object to the simile because it is indeed too “one-sided” so far as the free enjoyment is concerned.

III.

The Charm and Beauty in Exclusiveness.

A LADY friend writes: "The love of a varietist would bring me joy, but mixed with pain. To every gladness he'd create there'd be an added bane. The roses he would offer would be full of thorns, and sting me to the quick. It would be the inexorable law; though he might kindly lavish much upon me, he'd take my peace of mind. And why? Because I'm so constituted that when others receive the same the value of the gift decreases for me."

In my answer I said that these expressions reminded me of the ladies of the "upper ten" in New York, who become furious when they find that the design of their most precious piece of jewelry is imitated by others—it thereby loses its value—they want to possess it all alone and be envied for it, too. I suppose I would be justified in denouncing both of these feelings as the quintessence of selfish greed, as horribly ignoble sentiments, which make their possessors find their greatest pleasure, not in the enjoyment of the Beautiful in itself, but in the envy of their neighbors." But I am afraid that

that would influence neither the actions of the New York ladies nor the feelings of my amiable correspondent. We New-Idealists do not ask self-sacrifice or self-denial from any one, neither for ourselves nor for the cause. So long as my opponent is "so constituted" we do not expect her to do otherwise than guard against the love of the "varietist" and look for the jewel that will shine only for her. But we claim that this is a morbid craving which brings unhappiness to her and others and of which we will try to cure her. Perceiving that she and many of her sisters and brethren are truly noble and magnanimous in every other respect, we cannot believe that this craving is caused only by the ignoble feelings of envy and grudging of the happiness of their fellow-beings, but are confident that it is the outgrowth of superstition, from which they can be liberated as easily as we are freed (who suffered similarly). We have found the root and cause of the evil: An absurd, an impossible, love-ideal, set before every heart by the entire literature of love of past and present ages. When you read one of those millions of novels, you are thrilled with delight when you reach the grand climax—the meeting of the lovers, in which they declare their passion and find that they are "everything to each other!" And you shudder when we tell you that a man may love a dozen women! You promptly imagine that John (as a varietist) would have said to Mary on that lovely evening of June: "Remember that I love Susan and Amy, Jenny and Carrie as much as I love you." Ah, that would indeed

decrease the value, yes, it would rob the occasion of all its charm and beauty. No, no, you want exclusiveness and must enjoy it *forever!* And the kind novelist says, "They were happy forever afterwards."

Do you see your great mistake? The longing for exclusiveness in the highest enjoyment of love is a healthy and natural desire, but your wish to have this highest enjoyment continue forever means a morbid craving for an impossibility. It is easy enough for the author to say that the couple were happy ever after, but he will not dare to delineate for you the bliss of that memorable June evening perpetually continued. If he does give you any details of that *future* happiness, they will be of an entirely different nature, they will draw a picture of a "quiet friendship," and it will be a hard task for you to give any valid reasons why this should exclude Susan, Jane, *et al.* And if the author wishes to enliven this serene quietude with an occasional repetition of the bliss of the June evening, it will require extraordinary circumstances to make them appear plausible. Your error consists in confusing exclusive *love* with exclusive *possession*. There is in reality but one kind of genuine, natural exclusiveness in love and that exists while the appreciation of the beautiful qualities found in each other fills the hearts of two lovers with such intense exaltation of joy that it makes them for the time being oblivious of the entire outside world. If you crave this ideal enjoyment of love, then I can tell you that the New Ideal Society would vastly in-

crease your chances of obtaining it. You may enjoy many a repetition, but if you ask for an unending continuance of such bliss, then I would say that no mortal being has ever enjoyed it, and that no future society can ever offer it to you.

If, however, you crave an instrument which shall be constantly at your command for the satisfaction of your love desires, go to the followers of the old ideal, but remember that that means not exclusive love, but simply exclusive possession, an exclusiveness which is absolutely void of any charm or beauty.

IV

Woman vs. Man.

ONE of the most deplorable features of the so-called Woman's Rights Movement is the intense pleasure and satisfaction so many of these reformers seem to find in condemning, not a certain system or a certain institution, not a certain class of human beings, but *Man*, the "brutal biped who tyrannizes over and tortures pure and noble Woman!" This tendency becomes most strikingly apparent in the treatment of the subject of sex-relations and love.

For some time, I made the pleas of women for woman's emancipation my special study. I found a great deal of sound logic, plenty of irrefutable arguments to convince me, but I was so thoroughly disgusted with these constant denunciations of the masculine sex, *as a whole*, that I turned with a sigh of relief to a finely written article in a German paper in which this same tyrannical inclination in love was claimed to belong to the characteristics of the "Eternal Womanly," and the argument was substantiated by a very significant example from actual life. Let me warn you, dear

ladies: Every accusation of this kind we can promptly return with the same justification. You tell us of thousands of faithful, loving women, who suffer under the tyranny of cruel and heartless men—and you are right—but can we not show you also thousands of men whose happiness has been destroyed, whose lives have been wrecked, by being enslaved through their love for cruel, tyrannical women? You tell us of thousands of men who have “seduced” women and “ruined” them through treachery and continued deceit. This is also true, but are there not thousands of cruel and heartless coquettes on your side whose greatest pleasure consists in arousing the passion of love in men and then turning aside with a haughty sneer for their “carnal desires?” You denounce men for their tyrannical inclinations and yet we hear from your own ranks of reformers the pronunciamiento: “Henceforth woman shall be the queen in the realm of love.” Ah, yes, to pose as a queen with a score of men kneeling at her feet, whom she can kill with a frown or make willing tools by a smile—that is indeed the ideal of many a woman!

Let us stop these most absurd of all class-animosities! Let us study instead the causes of the evil, and we will soon find that these depravities and tyrannical inclinations belong neither to the “eternal manly” nor the “eternal womanly,” and that the misery caused by them is not due to any particular quality of either sex, but is simply the natural result of that terrible superstition which says, “If thou truly lovest me, thou must forever

be the willing object for the satisfaction of my love-desires!"

I have shown the pernicious effects of mutual possession, but I omitted to state that this mutuality is very seldom a perfect one. In most cases the relation means master and slave, and the slave is always the one who loves most fervently. It could not be otherwise. If a woman is passionately in love with a man, who feels rather indifferent towards her but agrees to "live with her" for some practical reason, then the former's lot is sure to be humiliation and slavery, whether the relation be a "free union" or a Catholic marriage. If, on the other hand, a man truly and fervently loves a woman, who likes him well enough to play with him occasionally, but does not care very much to possess him, then the man, in spite of all his masculine strength and power, will be nothing but a miserable slave of the woman. In all such cases the passionate craving for possession gives an immense power to the indifferent object of the longing. Generally this is terribly misused, but where the adored person is too nobly magnanimous to use his or her authority it may happen that the master suffers even more than the slave.

I trust that the reader will understand by this time that when I speak of the craving for possession, I do not mean the possession through statute law (which, aside from the economic element involved, is little more than a meaningless farce), nor through moral duty (which is far more effect-

ive), but the craving for that possession which means vastly more than all the rest, "Through thy love for me thou shalt be all mine forever!" It is this morbid craving for an impossibility which drives millions of men and women into slavery—or insanity.

Discard a foolish love-ideal; then you will not care to be the master, and need never fear to be enslaved by love.

In our longing for the satisfaction of our present love-desire and in our endeavors to obtain it, we may sometimes appear to you extremely humble, but it will always be the joyfully rendered homage to beauty and goodness of the hopeful wooer—never the submissive servility of the trembling would-be *owner*!

V.

The Weakness of Woman.

A YOUNG woman, an enthusiastic follower of the Free-Love-Theory, who devoted a great deal of time and energy to the propaganda of the cause, once met a gentleman who, after an acquaintance of a few hours, proposed to marry her. She was pleased with the compliment conferred upon her, but of course rejected the offer and explained with a pleasant smile that she was not inclined to matrimony. Shortly after this she met another gentleman who, hearing that she claimed to be a Free-Lover, proposed to her to spend the evening as his guest at a supper and a concert, plainly intimating that the recreation might end with sexual intercourse. Shocked by this "terrible insult offered to her," she promptly declared that she was "not of that kind," that "Free Love did not mean Free Lust," and bitterly denounced the "depraved, vulgar, carnal man!"

Pondering over this queer view of Free-Lovers, I was struck by the thought that this little incident plainly illustrates the main cause of woman's weakness.

Suppose that a hundred average men of pres-

ent society (they need not be radicals) were asked by a good looking young woman to enjoy sexual intercourse with her. Would any one of them consider that an insult? No, the genuine moralists among them would turn aside and chide her for her immorality, the others would take advantage of the favorable offer and scorn the "impure" woman afterwards, but not a single one of them would ever think of considering the offer an insult; more or less, every one would feel it to be a flattering compliment. Now reverse the case and suppose that one hundred women (who may be all radicals) were asked the same question by a good looking young man. Every one of them would consider it a terrible insult, yes, would feel that the mere fact of the offer had somewhat degraded her.

What does this mean? It means that the woman feels like the faithful servant who is asked to betray his master. And the man? Although in reality he may be a very humble slave, he will not admit it to himself in such a moment; he feels himself the sovereign individual who can do as he pleases. Hence he will be pleased by the offer but will consider it his duty to lecture the woman for cheating her present or future owner—or he may not feel called upon to guard other people's servants, may accept the offer, and despise thereafter the unfaithful slave.

So long as you ladies persist in proclaiming your own servitude you will remain, in spite of all the legal and social power which you may gain, weak women who need "protection."

There are many places and many gatherings to-day where it is "dangerous" for a woman to go "unprotected," while they are perfectly safe for all men. Do we owe this to our superior muscular strength? No, the times are past when men relied upon that for their safety. Do we owe it to our greater skill and ability? Certainly not. Do you fear to be harmed or molested by physical attacks, do you fear to be robbed or murdered there? Where that danger exists many men do not dare to go unprotected.

You fear "insults"? Any boy can insult you! any fool can deprive you by mere silly talk of some of that "sweet, untouched purity" which you desire to retain for your future owner; any libertine can hurt your feelings by asking you to be unfaithful to your present masters, while we men (by virtue of the secret bond existing between us) feel as proud lords who cannot be insulted by those who (unconsciously, perhaps) proclaim themselves our servants!

And so we often note the remarkable fact that a fine specimen of womankind, strong and healthy in body and mind, is protected by a perfect weakling of the masculine sex, or even by a mere imitation of a man, and that the protection is not merely imaginary. All men are extremely sensitive in honoring and respecting the property claims to a woman, when the real or supposed claimant is present.

Such incidents as those related in the beginning of this chapter would turn out entirely differently

if the woman were a New-Idealist. The man who, after a few hours acquaintance, should propose to make her his sexual possession for life would receive a rather haughty and severe answer, while the second one, if somewhat agreeable, would be pretty sure of having a gracious smile bestowed upon him. She might say to him, of course: "Go to your owner (or 'Go and find the master whom you deserve'), I do not care for the love of an unfaithful slave," or she might think with the man of to-day that it was not her duty to protect the property-rights of others and so enjoy what was agreeable to her and reject what did not please her. Whether she were inclined to reject or accept any or all of the invitations, she would consider the offer a compliment which could not possibly do her any harm, and she would be too proud ever to consider it an insult.

Freed from superstition she will feel safe wherever man is safe; she will be neither a queen nor a slave, but a proud, free, self-dependent individual, feeling that, as to worth, power, and opportunities, she is fully equal to Man.

VI.

“Calling Names.”

AN enraged moralist gives vent to his feelings in the following manner: “You wish to turn this world into a great bawdy-house, an immense brothel!”

It seems but natural to treat such accusations as a mean calumny or as an uncalled-for insult. I have found, however, that a hasty answer in such cases is decidedly unwise, and I wish to give New-Idealists the benefit of my experience. This man may be perfectly right and prove it to you, too! It all depends upon the definition of the words used, which are far from being self-explanatory. A bawdy-house or brothel is a house of prostitution. Now, if prostitution is defined as meaning sexual intercourse outside of any sexual relation, then we do indeed wish to transform this world into an immense brothel—and it will be none the worse for the fact that Mr. X. pleases to call it by that name.

You might reply that no educated person would claim that prostitution means any such thing, but I assure you that this interpretation is

as general as any other. Instead of entering into a useless linguistic dispute, it is far wiser, far more effective, to promptly accept your opponent's definition (whatever it may be) and argue from that viewpoint. It is well, of course, to finally add your own definition.

Suppose that we should accept that definition of prostitution which from the noblest and loftiest point of view is the only correct one, *i. e.*, sexual intercourse without sexual love. Then the present civilized world comes as near to being an immense brothel as we could possibly make it, while we intend to change it into a house of true love and genuine joy.

The same advice holds good in cases where a free woman is called a "fast woman," courtesan, or a prostitute. Suppose that she should have the courage to simply answer (to make the matter short), that she would rather be a truly happy prostitute than a miserable and unhappy "virtuous woman." That would promptly force her opponent to back out and make a fool of himself (by calling for the police, or the like), or to come down to facts!

Do not be afraid of mere words. When your opponent, perceiving the weakness of his position, begins "calling names" do not get angry, but ask him in as amiable a manner as possible for a definition, and you will soon "corner" him or rid yourselves in the promptest and most satisfactory manner of a useless, hypocritical meddler.

VII.

Criticisms of Socialists and Anarchists.

ONE of the first letters received in answer to the request in my German book read as follows: "I am a Socialist, hence I perfectly agree with your theory in general." Shortly after this another one said: "Being an Anarchist, I agree with you of course!" Many duplicates were received during the following months, especially of the latter expression. Here was a conundrum for me! Anarchists have to agree with me because they are Anarchists—and Socialists must, for once, agree with the Anarchists! Subsequent correspondence soon solved the riddle: The theory of Free Love (*i. e.*, objection to any and all legal interference with love- and sex-relations) has been pretty thoroughly ventilated in all modern languages, and as a result the great majority of the radical reformers of all the different shades acquiesce therein more or less. This Free Love means Anarchy in love; hence every Anarchist is of course a Free-Lover, and it may be added that most Socialists are Anarchists so far as love- and sex-relations are concerned. I declared myself a Free-Lover and my book was received

simply as another addition to the argumentation in behalf of this theory. It seems that this presumption was so firmly settled in the minds of all readers from the beginning that they failed to perceive that in this case a great deal more was asked. This is all the more remarkable since the fact is that of the 148 pages there were, all in all, not more than two devoted to the subject of legal law and legal interference. Yes, I stand for Anarchy in love, and so do millions of men and women to-day (including all Anarchists, many Socialists, Populists, Single-Taxers *et al.*, yes, even Democrats and Republicans), but, alas, this fact does not make most of them any less the prosaic philistines they were before their conversion. The comparatively few of this class whom the conviction has inspired to active agitation and propaganda we will gladly welcome as co-workers in a noble cause, but if any of them tells me that it is the police and the militia which hinders him from being free in love, I must promptly avow that such a statement is an evidence of a terrible error. Of all the powers which enslave us in this respect, the legal law is the most harmless; hence, to be free in love requires a great deal more than Anarchy!

VIII.

Tolstoism.

THE editor of the "Freidenker" is not the only person who has called my attention to the fact that the gratification of the sexual instinct is not a "demand of nature." Quite a number of others have told me the same and they advanced far better arguments in support of their assertion than the silly quotation from an "authority" that "continence has not killed anybody yet." Some of these persons claimed that, in my description of the trials of the youth of to-day, I have greatly overestimated the evil effects of chastity, that the practice of continence is not nearly so difficult as I believe it to be and need not have the injurious influence which I ascribe to it. To such remarks, I offer the following answer: In the chapter criticised I do not attempt to give you a description of what *might be*, but of what really is the condition to-day. I do not need the acquiescence of an eminent authority to prove to me that mine are truthful descriptions of the existing conditions, because I know that they are true from personal experience and personal observations. In regard to the pos-

sibilities, I say this: To a person who is and always has been perfectly "chaste" in his thoughts, continence is not so very difficult and need not have the effects described in the chapter on Our Young Men. In many circles of present "civilized" society the education (by parents and all associates) is strictly consistent and quite effectual in the attempt to retain perfect "chastity" in the minds of the girls and as a result we find many truly "chaste" women, to whom continence is quite an easy matter and who do not become conscious of any bodily or mental inconvenience resulting from it. For any youth, however, who is neither a weakling nor an idiot, such chastity in thoughts is utterly impossible under the existing circumstances. It would be possible only in a community where all were united in the effort to discourage as much as possible the development of the sex-nature in the boys as well as in the girls by scientific means, *i. e.*, by a constant and consistent ascetic influence on the minds of the young. The general teaching at present is this: We are taught that the sexual desire is a low, vulgar and mean craving—and soon thereafter we learn that the satisfaction of this same desire is the crowning glory, the triumph of love! The woman denounces the carnal appetite of man—and yet it is the satisfaction of this same appetite which makes her "all his own;" it is the satisfaction of this "vulgar, carnal" appetite which she reserves for her highest, her "purest," her only love! From earliest childhood we hear all around us enthusiastic raving about the beautiful love-union of a

man and a woman, and when we come to understand it we find that it means—a union for mutual sexual service! You preach continence to the young man—and ridicule his chastity! You tell us of the noble and pure “spiritual” love of a happy couple—and when we hear of an “unfaithfulness” of either party it invariably means—a breach of the contract for exclusive mutual sexual service! The same woman who speaks with scorn and disdain of the “sensuality” of man suffers terrible agony when the least particle of the “sensuality” of “her” man is enjoyed by any other woman! Only a perfect fool or a hypocrite can claim that such terrible inconsistencies, such shameful hypocrisy, could ever be conducive to anything good or noble in human beings. Whatever your ideal may be you must condemn the present moral code. There are but two theories proposed for the improvement of the present deplorable conditions, which can lay any claim to consistency. The one consists in preaching and attempting to create *real* chastity or, in other words, in solving the sexual question by removing the cause, sexual desire. The other is sexual freedom. The great majority of our so-called Free-thinkers are yet in a terribly unsound and indefensible position in regard to this question. They thoughtlessly imitate the priest in his praise and glorification of chastity, purity, etc., without knowing why they do so, without realizing that, for them, it cannot mean any more at the utmost than an arbitrarily-enforced continence for a certain time or for life (as chance may have it) for the

sake of giving our rulers an opportunity to regulate our sex-relations.

The famous Russian, Count Leo Tolstoi, is one of the noblest advocates of the first named theory. He is intelligent enough to see the shameful hypocrisy in our present morals and he is courageous enough to be consistent. He is one of the few honest followers of Jesus and as such must of course consider chastity as a good and beautiful thing, *per se*. He therefore condemns as we do the idea of considering every love-union as a sexual union—he condemns marriage and concubinage—but he also asks us to use our utmost power to suppress that “terrible devil within ourselves” which drives us to both, and he asks our poets to stop their passionate love-songs, which are so extremely liable to arouse sensual desires—in short, he asks all of us to be really, truly chaste!

I prefer sexual freedom, but I wish to inform my critics that I do not base my preference on any such arguments as that that “continence is impossible” or that “the gratification of the sexual instinct is a demand of nature.” I prefer sexual freedom because it is better in every way for the happiness of human beings on earth, and because, as a Freethinker, I do not have to take into consideration a future life in heaven or hell.

IX.

A Paradox.

IN the chapter on "The Old and the New Ideal" you will find these assertions: "The difficulty of dissolution is the only point in marriage which gives it a certain value"—and—"The weak point about marriage is marriage itself." My critic objects to these statements, claiming that they form a "violent paradox." He says: "If marriage is an evil—as you assert and I admit—how can its indissolubility be its one redeeming feature?"

As other readers may have received the same impression, I deem it expedient to explain.

I assert that a sexual contract is an evil under all circumstances. Therefore, if marriage would mean no more than a contract for mutual sexual service, then the foregoing statements would not only be a paradox, but a real absurdity. But marriage means far more; it is a complex affair. The sexual "belonging together" may indeed be termed the essential part of marriage, but this carries with it some inevitable attributes, some of which I would not call "evils," as for example

the true comradeship feeling and the family relation. If a man and a woman enter into marriage with the firm belief that this is a "sacred" union which should be absolutely void of any thought of dissolution, then they degrade thereby their future sexual intercourse to the lowest degree, but, in the majority of cases, they will also establish and secure thereby a lasting, intimate comradeship between themselves affording them many advantages which, under existing circumstances, are yet of great value. If, however, two human beings enter into the same kind of a union, but with the presumption that it may be dissolved at any time "by the will of either party," then they will degrade their sexual enjoyments the same as in a real Christian marriage and will miss the one and only "redeeming feature" of the institution, the security gained through the confidence in a *reliable* partner and comrade.

To avoid misunderstanding, I must state that the foregoing remarks have no reference whatever to the legality of marriage. The attempt to control love-contracts (whether they refer to a "belonging together in the realm of love" for life or only for a limited time) by statute laws, which means to try to sustain them by brute force, is a disastrous folly, which has been exposed by many intelligent Free Lovers. I must again call attention to the fact that the object of this treatise is simply to answer the question, how to gain the greatest possible happiness in our love and sex life *in freedom* and—how to attain freedom in this

sphere in the best and quickest manner. I found that of the two unions mentioned, the former, which is meant for life, affords far more chances of happiness than the latter. But I also found that both of these unions are to be denounced as harmful and inexpedient, that the real evil consists in "marriage itself," that is, in that unnatural and unjustifiable combination which is bound either to make the comradeship dependent upon the sexual feeling, or to make the sexual intercourse dependent upon "purely spiritual love" and upon practical calculations on the value of a business partnership.

If it is impossible for you to free yourselves from the idea that the only satisfactory enjoyment of genuine love between a man and a woman is to be found in the living together as in Christian marriage, then there is but one right line of action for you: Consider deeply and investigate carefully before entering into such an extremely important union, but when you do enter into it, let it be meant for life, let it be free from any thought of a future "change." This will be far better than a marriage contract subject to notice of withdrawal. Do not be deluded by the erroneous presumption that the latter would secure your freedom in love. Beware of the dangerous mistake of over-estimating the value of the clause which says that the union may be dissolved "at any time by the will of either partner" upon a "settlement of accounts." Such a dissolution is indeed possible, but it is never possible without causing severe wounds.

except in cases where the union means no more than a contract for physical services (household and sexual intercourse).

If, however, you have freed yourselves from superstition, then you will promptly reject both marriage for life and—marriage on trial!

X.

My Hopes and Fears.

MY critic informs me that his most serious objection to my writings is that I "almost infinitely underrate the dangers attending a free sexual life." He has received the impression that I consider it a very easy matter to live according to the new ideas and perceives great danger in my unwarranted "optimism," which he ascribes to want of acquaintance with the power of fanaticism in general and the mob and police in particular. He warns me not to expect "a sudden transformation of the face of society" and claims that many who fully agree with me will be hindered from acting according to their conviction by a thousand and one things. It seems that he was induced to these remarks by the following statements made by me, which he claims to be contrary to truth:

1. The government does not force you to make any sexual contract.

2. The government does not bother about your love-affairs.

3. The government cannot control the sex-relations of a New-Idealist, if he or she guards against

ever giving any notice to the public when he or she intends to add the sexual embrace to the enjoyment of love.

The first statement is not only true, but the law goes even farther. It declares that if any marriage contract (the only sexual contract which it acknowledges) is brought about by the appliance of physical force or by threatening with such, it shall be null and void.

The second statement is literally true. The word Love does not appear in the statute books. But the government does bother about your sex-relations, hence, if love-affair and sex-relation are identical for you, the above statement is in fact meaningless. For the New-Idealist, however, it will have some import.

In making these three statements I wished to call attention to the fact that the "deeds" asked of the New-Idealists happen to be perfectly legal, while for the Free-Lover of to-day consistent action means *illegal* action. The Free Lover enters into sexual relations and sexual contracts which are not meant for life and which shall be dissoluble without the intervention of the courts. He has the right to do so, but that does not change the fact that it is still an illegal action subject to legal punishment. The New-Idealist, however, declares that he will never enter into any sexual relation, will make no sexual contract whatever, and the statute law upholds him in this. He will enter into such contracts for co-operation with one woman or a number of women, for a short or a long time as

it may suit him best, but will declare that none of these unions include any kind of a sexual belonging together or a sexual contract. Mrs. Grundy may think it terrible that a man lives in the same house with a woman whom he loves, associates all kinds of spiritual and economic interests with her, engages her as his housekeeper, etc., without "owning" the woman and without occupying the same bed with her,—but the statute law says that he may do so. And furthermore, the New-Idealist has a room to which he or she has for the time being an exclusive legal claim and declares that he or she will receive therein as his or her guest any man or woman with whom he or she wishes to be alone, and lock the door and "pull down the blinds" whenever that appears expedient. Mrs. Grundy may say that this would be very indecent, yes, immoral, but as yet there is no law in any statute book of the United States which forbids these actions, not even in the pious city of New York.

These are the principles of New-Idealism; these are the actions which constitute the "propaganda of deeds." Remember, dear reader, that to be a New-Idealist does not require a variety in sex-life, that, in fact, it does not require any sexual intercourse whatever. I have said that in freedom these ideas would naturally lead us to a "variety in the sex-life of almost every human being," and have tried to prove to you that we have no reason to dread this as a calamity, but, however firm my belief, this is yet but a supposition and certainly no dogmatic demand.

In the foregoing I have shown you that the deeds which I ask and expect of New-Idealists are legal actions. But, although principle does not demand sexual intercourse, many of them may think that their happiness does demand it, and there can be no doubt that any sexual enjoyment by a New-Idealist would be an illegal action in most states of the Union (not in England). How much this fact shall influence them is entirely optional with each individual, as the law referring to this is a "dead-letter-law" so far as New-Idealists are concerned. So long as the statutes allow a woman to receive a man in her room and to exclude outsiders, a legal control of sexual intercourse is absolutely impossible unless the people, as a rule, in one way or another plainly indicate the fact, whenever a meeting is to be a sexual association. This appeared so obvious to me that I did not expect any objection. But my critic does not agree to this and to prove the correctness of his view he calls my attention to the fact that in thousands of cases in this country women have received severe legal punishments when nothing was actually proved against them except that they had enjoyed the exclusive company of men in their bedrooms. It seems that these incidents have given my opponent the impression that such actions in themselves are punishable by law. If so he is seriously mistaken. These women were not punished for the actions proved by witnesses, but these actions were offered as "circumstantial evidence" which was considered sufficient to prove "beyond a reasonable doubt," to the sat-

isfaction of judge and jury, that an illicit sexual intercourse had taken place. I claim that in most cases there was a valid reason for the presumption, and I believe that no more errors of judgment have been made in these cases, comparatively, than in all other cases where a conviction was reached by "circumstantial evidence" only. Suppose that I should happen to observe that one of my fair neighbors in this conservative little city received a man, who is neither her husband nor any near relative, in her bedroom, lock the door and retain him there from 8 to 11 P. M. I am afraid that there would be but very little doubt in my mind as to the nature of the interview. Suppose that this woman was brought before a court to defend herself against the charge of illicit sex-association. She pleads "not guilty" and says that the interview was a perfectly "innocent" meeting that had no other purpose than a private talk on important matters. The juryman will then argue thus to himself: "This woman knows perfectly well that to enjoy the company of a man in her bedroom behind locked doors from 8 to 11 P. M. is considered an extremely indecent and immoral action, that it means to sacrifice her good name and to be ostracised from "good society." And now she wants to make us believe that she did so just to have a private talk with a certain man. She lies! What motive could have induced her to such action? No other than the desire to enjoy this man sexually. For a private talk there are plenty of less incriminating occasions. Guilty!" Can you deny that

there is a good deal of sound logical reasoning in this? And do you not perceive that such reasoning would be absurd in the case of a New-Idealist? The latter will not only give plenty of sound reasons why she receives gentlemen in her room, but will prove by witnesses that that does not necessarily mean sexual intimacy. Even the dullest of jurors, however dangerous and immoral he may consider her views, will have to admit that there is a great deal of "reasonable doubt."

It is due only to a firmly established and generally accepted social custom that such "circumstantial evidence" can lead to conviction and that a legal control of sex associations is possible to some extent. With New-Idealists, after they have openly and clearly demonstrated that they denounce the prevailing customs and that, in fact, it is customary with them to receive visitors of the opposite sex in their private apartments for many different purposes besides sexual intimacy, such a legal control will be utterly impossible as the same evidence would prove nothing in their case.

These facts regarding our position towards the law are of great importance to us, but they do not make the pioneer work for our revolutionary idea an easy matter. There are yet many formidable enemies confronting us and this battle for freedom in love will require some personal sacrifice by every one of our comrades. What I wished to show you is that there are no insurmountable obstacles in our way (as in the case of a small number desiring

an economic revolution), that we can gain a decided victory even in present society, and that this victory will be fully worth the sacrifice to every combatant.

No, I do not expect a “sudden transformation of the face of society.” I fear that my book will reach comparatively but very few of my “fellow citizens,” that a great number of its readers will find it impossible to subdue their prejudices sufficiently to give me a fair hearing and that the “dread of the ghost” will seriously hamper their logical reasoning. And there are others whose minds are filled so completely with a fixed idea of an economic reform that they are incapable of giving serious attention to any other subject. They will say in substance, after glancing over the book: “Settle the money question, then we will be all-right in our love-relations!” Others again will listen to nothing but the claims for the “rights of the individual.” They have grown so extremely “sensitive” on this point that they consider it an attack on their freedom or at least on their “individuality” if you suggest to them a change in their present mode of living. They will say: “Let every one do as he pleases! Let the monogamist have monogamy, let the polygamist have polygamy, let the lovers belong to each other exclusively so long as they choose to so belong to each other, etc., etc.” I will answer: No, I will not let them! I do not extend the “*laissez-faire*” theory that far. I will try my best to induce these people to give up their monogamy, their polygamy, their belonging

together! And he will answer: "When you begin to *prescribe* what people should do and what they should not do, then you are not *liberal* enough for me, you are an "*authoritarian!*"—and we are opposed to all authority!!" These persons who are unable to discriminate between a proposition substantiated by arguments and a demand to be enforced by law or fear of physical punishment are, for me, the most "hopeless cases."

But I hope and trust that I will find a few who have the necessary intellectual power to master their superstitions and who will deem it worth while to devote some serious thought, not only to the subject of our rights, but also to the question of how to use them to attain the greatest possible happiness. I am convinced that these will come to the same conclusions which I have reached, *i. e.*, that we should not only repudiate legal and moral *ownership*, but should try our best to exterminate completely the craving for *possession* for the purpose of satisfying love's desires. These few will exert a powerful influence over the entire society, but the "transformation" will be a very slow process, especially in the beginning. Fortunately we do not require the majority to enjoy the benefits of our enlightenment. We cannot reasonably expect that a large percentage of the present generation will be able to free itself from superstition, but when the little children of to-day reach the age of manhood or womanhood they will be in a far better condition to receive the new ideas than we were at that critical period. They will grow up in

a time of disquietude, dissatisfaction, and revolution and the intelligent ones (of the Freethinkers at least) will notice that there are no fixed principles to rely upon in this sphere. Louder and louder they hear the cry from all sides that "Marriage is a Failure!"—the "free union" must appear as a dangerous experiment which promises little if any relief,—but the youthful heart will crave for love. If, in this dilemma, they hear of a few advanced Freethinkers who enjoy everything that is beautiful in love without any desire of possession, they will not fail to perceive that this would lead them out of all their troubles. Watch the development of the next generation and you will perceive quite a "transformation!"

My fondest hopes, however, consist in the anticipation that at least a few of the gifted writers and the liberty-loving poets of our age may be induced to demonstrate to the world—in nobler and more impressive words than they are at my command—the value and beauty of the NEW IDEAL!



DEAR READER:

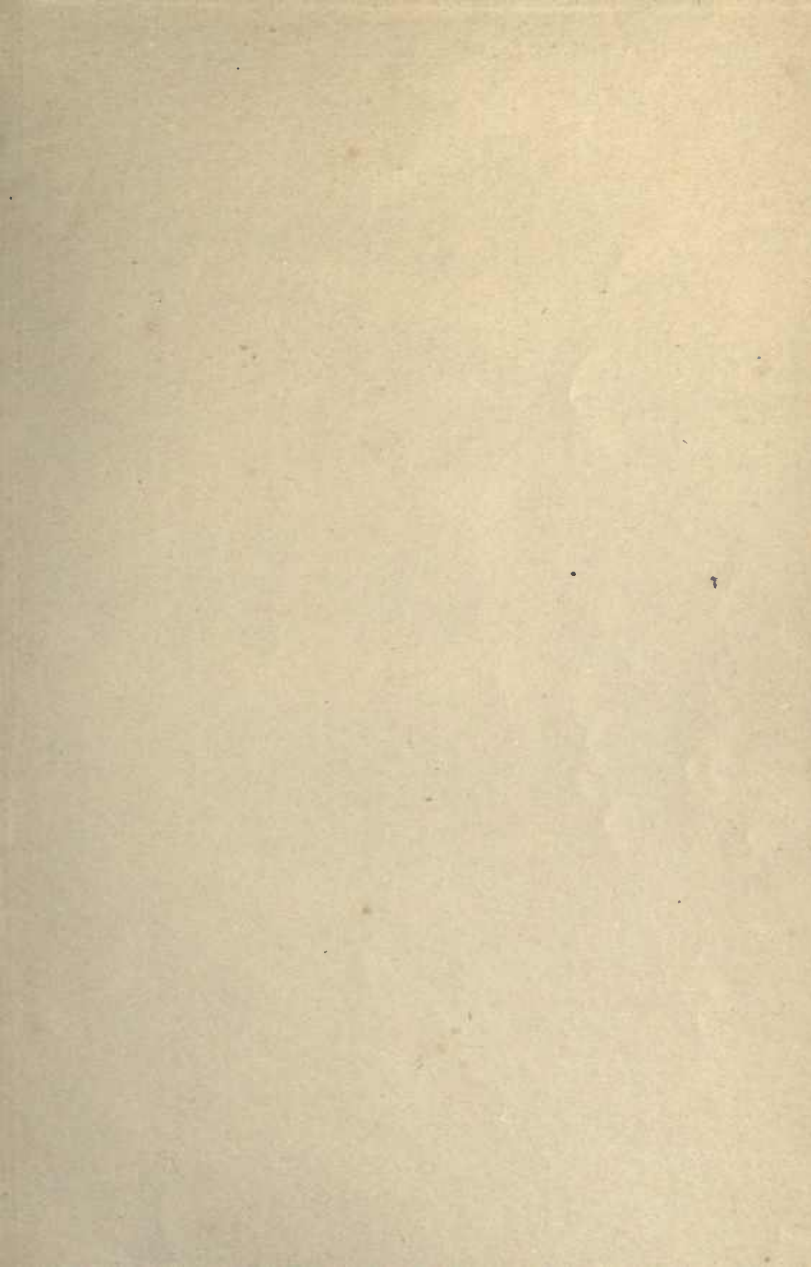
If you have found these, my propositions, worthy of serious study and investigation, I wish to hear your opinion (whatever it may be) and respectfully request you to correspond with me after a careful reading of the entire treatise.

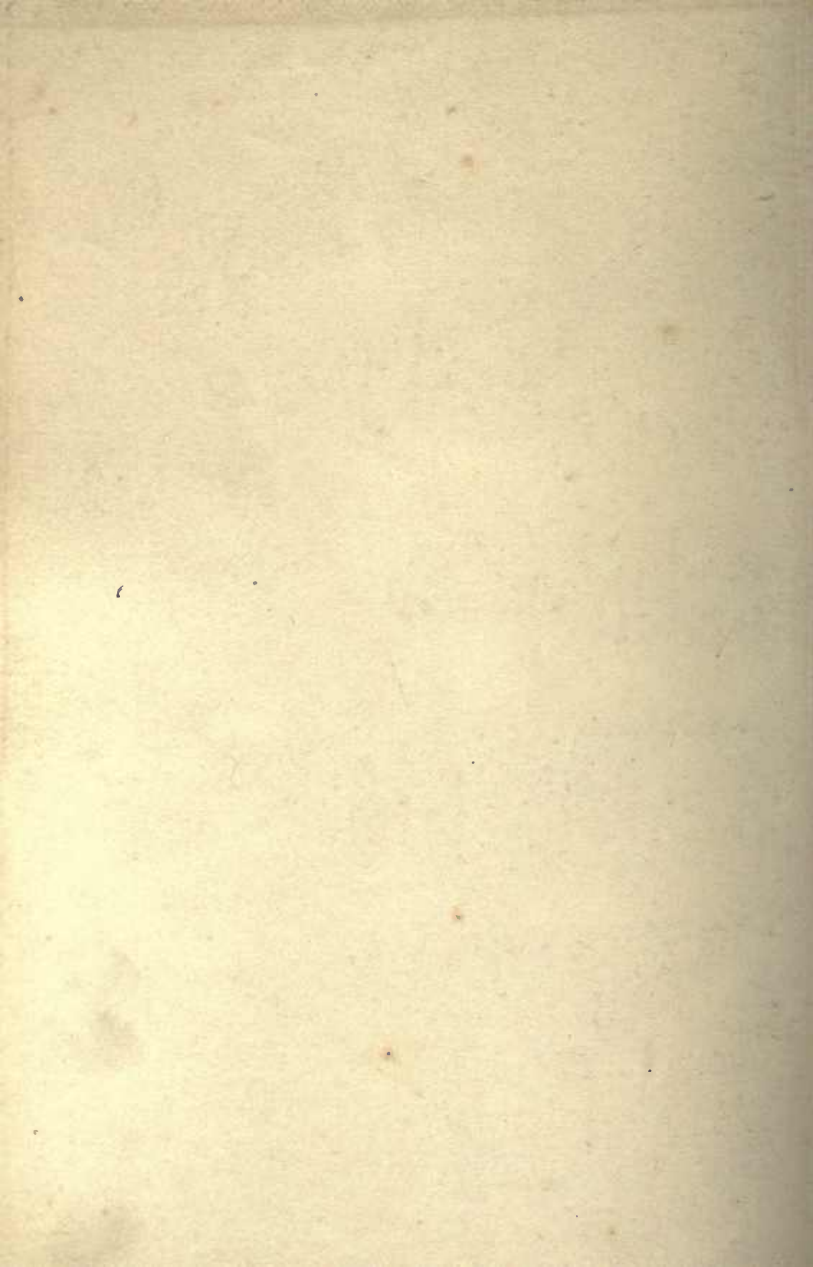
All such letters will be duly acknowledged and answered as promptly and fully as my time will permit.

I want to further test the strength of my arguments in discussions with honest, well-meaning opponents who are interested in the subject; I want to hear of your doubts and fears and to try to dispel them, and I wish to exchange ideas with enthusiastic sympathizers as to the best mode of action in our "propaganda of deeds."

EMIL F. RUEDEBUSCH,

Mayville, Wisconsin.





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